

Regional Consultations with NGOs in Europe

Geneva, Switzerland | 23-24 September 2025

In-Person/ hybrid, UNHCR HQ Building

Detailed Agenda and Speaker List

TUESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER

08:15-09:00 – Welcome and Pick Up of Badges / log-in to the virtual meeting room

09:00-10:00 – Opening Remarks and Setting the Scene

This moderated dialogue between NGOs and senior management from UNHCR and ICVA will provide high-level reflections on the overarching themes of the Consultations and situate them within a global context, including the impact of the global aid cuts on UNHCR, civil society organizations, the strategic value of collaborating with civil society actors and how we work together to enhance impact.

SPEAKERS

Ruvendrini Menikdiwela, Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, UNHCR

Ruvendrini Menikdiwela is UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, taking up her appointment in January 2024. Menikdiwela served as the Director of the UNHCR New York Office from February 2020 to December 2023. Prior to this, she held the position of UNHCR Representative in Pakistan from September 2017 to February 2020 and also previously served as the UNHCR Representative in Thailand. Her career with UNHCR spans 36 years and includes a range of functions at UNHCR Headquarters as well as country operations in Thailand, Turkmenistan and the United States. Menikdiwela obtained a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and a Master of Laws (LLM) in European Community and Public International Law from the University of Paris II. She is fluent in English and French.

Jamie Munn, Executive Director, ICVA

Dr. Jamie Munn joined ICVA as the Executive Director from November 2023. With over 17 years of experience in aid programming, strategic development, NGO coordination, and policy formation, Dr. Munn has held various roles across NGOs and the United Nations, working at head office, regional and country levels. His career has been marked by a strong belief in the pivotal role NGOs play in finding solutions to global challenges. Dr Munn has also made significant contributions to research, focusing on gendered identities in conflict zones, aid accountability and transparency, and post-conflict nationalism. At ICVA, Dr Munn brings his expertise in strategic leadership, innovation, effective advocacy, and a steadfast focus on transparency, accountability, and coordination.

Paul Olaf Stromberg, Bureau Deputy Director, UNHCR RBE

Paul Stromberg joined UNHCR in 1994 and is currently the Deputy Director of the Europe region based in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to taking up his current post he was Deputy Director of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, based in Amman, Jordan. He also led the organization's Head of the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization (DRRM) service (2017-2022) and was assigned as UNHCR's Deputy Representative in Jordan (2013-2017) and Syria (2010-2012). He was Chief of UNHCR's Field Safety Section (2008-2010), and Special Assistant to the High Commissioner (2004-2008). Mr. Stromberg has held various positions in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Rwanda, as well as on numerous emergency missions. Mr. Stromberg is a graduate of Wheaton College and the University of Chicago.

Marisa Leon Gomez Sonet, Partnerships and Stakeholders Advisor, R-SEAT

Since 2015, Marisa has worked on policy and advocacy on migration, refugee, and human rights issues extending from the multilateral sphere to the national, regional, and city levels. At the national level in the United States, she lobbied Congress to promote regularization pathways for undocumented migrants, halt discriminating travel bans, and increase refugee resettlement numbers. Most recently, at the Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva as part of the Human Rights and Refugees Programme, Marisa engaged with a wide range of stakeholders from across states, civil society, and the UN system. In her work with QUNO, she supported the development of engagement strategies, including meaningful migrant participation, for core migration multilateral processes, particularly the Global Compact for Migration and the International Migration Review Forum. At the city level, Marisa worked to advance and strengthen sanctuary practices and migrant friendly policies in Chicago, following the lead of directly affected communities. Marisa is from Tegucigalpa, Honduras and began her career with a focus on human rights issues related to U.S. foreign policy and military spending in Central America. Marisa has a master's degree in Global Affairs, International Peace Studies concentration from the University of Notre Dame and a bachelor's degree in Global Studies, International Development, and French from Salve Regina University.

10:00-10:30 – Coffee Break**10:30-12:00 – Protection in Europe: State of Play and priorities for UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe**

This session will discuss the latest protection developments and challenges related to access to asylum in Europe, and how NGOs and UNHCR work together to advance the protection of asylum-seekers and refugees. UNHCR and NGO representatives will engage in a conversation on these critical issues to identify good practices and ways to enhance cooperation.

SPEAKERS**Anikó Bakonyi, Head of the Refugee Programme, Hungarian Helsinki Committee**

Anikó has been working for the Refugee Programme of the Hungarian Helsinki Committee since 2010 and in 2022, she assumed the role of Director. Her work focuses on protecting the rights of refugees through human rights monitoring, counseling, advocacy, and reporting. Between 2018-2024, she served as a Co-

Chair of the Board of the Berlin-based Civil Society Forum, with a membership of 180 organizations. She graduated from the Central European University with a degree in human rights and holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the Harvard Kennedy School.

Lefteris Papagiannakis, Director, Greek Council for Refugees

Lefteris Papagiannakis was born in France in 1971. He studied public law in the University of Lille II and holds an MA in European Community Law and International Economy. He worked in the European Parliament as a parliamentary assistant, on the education of children of the Muslim minority in Greece, as a legal counselor for the political party Ecologists Green and the Special Secretariat on environmental inspection. He was elected in the municipal council of Athens in 9/2014 and named Vice Mayor on Migrant and Refugee Affairs (3/2016-8/2019). He was the President of the Council for the Integration of Migrants of the Municipality of Athens (2014 – 2019). He was Chair of the working group Migration and Integration of the Eurocities Network (2017-2019), Vice President for Refugee Issues of ECCAR (European Coalition of Cities against Racism 2017-2019). Since 2017 he is a member of the Board of the Hellenic League for Human Rights. From 11/2019 – 9/2021 he was the Head of Advocacy, Policy and Research for SolidarityNow. He is a member of the advisory board of We Need Books Athens' first multilingual lending library and multicultural center. He is a member of the City Initiative on Migrants with Irregular Status in Europe.

Ieva Raubiško, Advocacy Officer, *Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem* (GPB – I Want to Help Refugees)

Ieva holds a DPhil in Social Anthropology from the University of Oxford. Ieva spent more than 10 years studying and teaching anthropology before establishing a social enterprise to make food together with refugees from Middle Eastern countries in Latvia in 2017. Having volunteered for *Gribu palīdzēt bēgļiem* for several years, Ieva joined the organisation as a Project Coordinator/Advocacy Officer in 2022. In August 2025, Ieva was found guilty of abetting "intentional illegal crossing of the state border by a group of people" under the Latvian Criminal Law for assisting five Syrian asylum seekers stuck at the border between Belarus and Latvia in January 2023. Ieva was sentenced to 200 hours of community service: yet another example of the growing trend of criminalisation of humanitarian aid and human rights assistance to irregular migrants in Europe.

Philippe Leclerc, Director of Bureau, UNHCR RBE

Mr. Leclerc has been working for UNHCR since 1990 in various positions throughout the world. He has been in charge of protection of refugees in Cameroon (1990-1992), in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in Serbia (1993), in Slovenia (1994-1995), in Brussels (1996), in Geneva UNHCR Headquarters as the Head of the Liaison Office for Switzerland and Liechtenstein (1996-2000), then in charge of the organization of the first Ministerial Meeting of State Parties to the UN Convention on the Status of Refugees held in the context of the Global Consultations on the protection of refugees on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention (2001). He was Assistant Chief of Mission in Kabul, Afghanistan (2002-2003), Head of the Statelessness Unit within the Division of International Protection at UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva (2004-2008), and Deputy-Representative in Damascus, Syria (2008-2010). He also participated to many emergency missions to the field, the last of which was in the Central African Republic from December 2013 to February 2014. He was the Representative in France (2010-2015) and in Greece (2015-2020). He lastly served as the Representative in Türkiye between January 2021 – September 2023, before his assignment as UNHCR Europe Bureau Director.

Francesca Bonelli, Head of the Partnerships and Coordination Service, UNHCR

Ms. Bonelli has 27 years of humanitarian experience, primarily with UNHCR, focusing on refugee protection, emergency response, and support to displaced populations. She has served in diverse contexts across Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America, including Kenya, Darfur, Afghanistan, the Western Balkans, and Brazil. Her expertise includes emergency coordination, inter-agency cooperation, community-based protection, refugee inclusion, and the protection of unaccompanied children. Before becoming Head of the Partnership and Coordination Service in UNHCR's Division of External Relations in 2024, she was UNHCR Representative in Moldova, Serbia, and Southeast Europe. Ms. Bonelli speaks Italian, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish, and has studied Serbian.

12:00-13:00 – Lunch Break**13:00-14:30 – Putting Protection at the centre of the EU Pact for Asylum and Migration**

This session will facilitate an in-depth discussion on where NGOs see challenges or opportunities with the implementation of the EU Pact for Asylum and Migration – as well as in coordination with UNHCR, particularly in the context of UNHCR's four prioritized areas, as well as on where NGOs see a role to contribute to a successful implementation of the Pact. Participants will engage in thematic break-out groups to explore specific topics: (1) Vulnerability Screening; (2) Restriction of Movement & Detention; (3) Monitoring; and (4) Legal Counselling and Assistance, with the aim to develop recommendations for moving forward together. The session will also highlight the importance of strengthening partnership and transparency between NGOs, refugee-led organizations and UNHCR in supporting Member States to implement the four prioritized areas.

14:30-15:00 – Coffee Break**15:00-16:30 – Parallel Break-out Sessions****Route-based Approach and Mixed Movements**

This session will discuss the necessary shift towards more humane and effective responses, concrete actions to counter smuggling and trafficking, and the delivery of better outcomes for those on the move, affected communities and States alike. It will also zoom in on the role NGOs, RLOs and civil society actors play to connect people on the move with services, as well as cross border programming.

SPEAKERS**Christine Goyer, Senior Policy Adviser, UNHCR RBE**

Christine Goyer is the Senior Policy Adviser in the Regional Bureau for Europe, leading UNHCR's work on the route-based approach. She joined the Bureau for Europe in May 2024. Prior to this, she served in Poland as Representative and Deputy Representative from 2018 to 2024. Ms. Goyer joined UNHCR in 2003, initially working as an Associate Field Officer in Afghanistan. Since 2004 she has worked in a range of field duty stations in Africa (Guinea, Uganda, and Democratic Republic of Congo), America (Haiti),

Middle East (Syria) and Europe (Türkiye, Ukraine) mainly in the field of protection and coordination. Ms. Goyer has a Masters of European Law and a master's in international Organizations.

Cecilia Vejby Andersen, Head of Unit - Global & EU Asylum, Danish Refugee Council

Cecilia Vejby Andersen is Head of Global & EU Asylum unit with the Asylum & Refugee Rights Division at DRC Danish Refugee Council. The team provides legal representation to asylum seekers in the Danish Dublin procedure, engages in analysis and advocacy on EU asylum law, and provides advisory capacity to DRCs global legal aid efforts. Before that Cecilia worked for several years as a legal advisor for asylum seekers in the Danish asylum procedure. Cecilia is focal point and core group member for DRC's engagement in the GRF Legal Community pledge.

Federica Toscano, Senior Advocacy Adviser, Save the Children

Federica Toscano leads Save the Children's advocacy efforts at the European Union level on issues related to migration, asylum, and displacement. In this capacity, she works to reinforce legal and policy frameworks that safeguard the rights of children and other vulnerable groups across Europe and along key migratory routes. Previously, Federica served as Head of Advocacy at Missing Children Europe, where she championed the rights of children at risk of disappearance as well as those subjected to exploitation and sexual abuse. Her expertise is further informed by prior experience within the EU institutions and by leadership roles in European youth organizations.

Angela Moore, Senior Community-Based Protection Officer, UNHCR RBE

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.



Addressing Statelessness in the Asylum Context

Statelessness and asylum are closely linked. The identification of statelessness in asylum procedures can improve decision-making, protect rights and help prevent new cases of statelessness. The EU Pact on Migration and Asylum provides an opportunity to advocate for the establishment of dedicated statelessness determination procedures to enhance the identification and protection of stateless people. NGOs play a critical role in supporting Member States to identify statelessness, supporting stateless applicants, raising awareness and advising on law and policy development in partnership with UNHCR and other relevant actors in Europe. Through a panel discussion, this session will provide an overview of statelessness in Europe, highlight relevant provisions in the EU Pact, and share practical experiences in community engagement and identification. A group exercise will then explore recommendations for States, the European Union and its institutions, UNHCR, and NGOs, to ensure the effective implementation of the Pact's statelessness-related provisions.

SPEAKERS

Sam Mosallai, Statelessness Officer, UNHCR RBE

In his role, he provides strategic direction to UNHCR's statelessness efforts in Europe and provides technical support to European States to prevent and resolve statelessness. Previously, he worked as a Legal Officer in the Statelessness Section at UNHCR's Headquarters in Geneva, and with UNHCR in Uganda and Ethiopia. Prior to joining UNHCR, he worked with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in Amman, Jordan and a Legal Aid NGO in Cairo, Egypt. Sam holds an LLB and LLM in Dutch, International and European Law from the Radboud University in Nijmegen, and a MA in Human Rights and Humanitarian Action from SciencesPo Paris.

Chris Nash, Director, European Network on Statelessness (ENS)

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). Chris has written widely on asylum, migration and statelessness policy. He has also previously worked as a consultant, including for the UN Refugee Agency.

Aleksandra Semeriak Gavrilienok, Project Manager, Statefree

Aleksandra Semeriak Gavrilienok, graduated in Political Science and with a master's degree in Migration Studies from the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, has developed her professional career in the non-profit sector, focusing on asylum, statelessness, migration and human rights. She serves as the Vice Chair of Trustees of the European Network on Statelessness, Steering Group Member of the Global Statelessness Fund and Associate Lecturer at Esade Ramon Llull University. Aleksandra was born in Latvia and grew up as a stateless person in Spain. Her personal experience and professional expertise motivated her to actively contribute to awareness raising, advocacy, capacity building and community engagement activities on statelessness in Europe and Spain, in collaboration with the European Network on Statelessness and as a member of the stateless-led organizations Statefree e.V. and Apatride Network.

Adam Stašek, Immigration Lawyer, Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU)

Adam Stašek is a senior lawyer and project coordinator at the Organization for Aid to Refugees (OPU), the oldest and largest NGO supporting refugees and other vulnerable migrants in Czechia. He focuses his work on the protection of refugees, asylum seekers, and stateless persons through litigation and advocacy at both national and international levels. He actively contributes to the ENS Statelessness Index and together with ENS, he co-developed the national toolkit for identifying stateless persons in Czechia. Adam holds a Master of Laws degree from Masaryk University.

16:30-17:00 – Feedback to Plenary

SPEAKERS

Nataliia Prokopchuk, Senior External Engagement Coordinator, UNHCR RBE

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.

WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER

09:00-10:15 – Community-Based Protection: Key to Sustainability

By zeroing in on several examples from the region, we will explore what community-based protection (CBP) programming can look like in the European context, with a particular focus on how these programs can enable sustainable protection interventions led by forcibly displaced and stateless people. In doing so, we will identify good practices and discuss how to continue and adapt these efforts in a resource-constrained environment—including through the mainstreaming of CBP activities. The discussion will also outline ways forward to demonstrate the continued importance of CBP, particularly in the context of sustainable responses.

SPEAKERS

Angela Moore, Senior Community-Based Protection Officer, UNHCR RBE

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.

Davina Saïd, Head of Forced Displacement, ICVA

Davina has extensive experience working in NGOs on issues related to forced displacement, beginning with the British Refugee Council. She also worked with NGOs in MENA where she focused on development and humanitarian interventions. Prior to joining ICVA, Davina worked for UNHCR in the Division of International Protection where she provided capacity building, policy development, and technical support to States on resettlement and complementary pathways programmes, as well as being the integration focal point. She has also worked with UNHCR in the Southern Africa region focusing on durable solutions. Davina 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 degree in the Social Sciences.

Constanța Dohotaru, Program Director, Laolaltă

Constanța Dohotaru is an urban planner, architect, and Program Director at Laolaltă, an NGO in Chișinău, Moldova, dedicated to participatory urban development, community building, and refugee support. She leads initiatives that combine inclusive urban design, grassroots engagement, and feminist principles, with a focus on social cohesion and equitable public spaces. Since 2022, Constanța and Laolaltă have coordinated projects such as Community Center 151, a safe space for local and refugee women; La un LOC, a nationwide small grants program for community spaces; and DVOR, a participatory courtyard development project. She is a member of the Gender Equality Platform in Moldova, a board member of Genderdoc-M and Platzforma, and an advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights. Through the vlog and podcast Omul face locul ("People Make the Place"), the team explores feminist perspectives on cities, highlighting how gender shapes everyday urban experiences. The work bridges architecture, activism, and policy, promoting cities that are safe, accessible, and welcoming for all.

Amina Khanom, Programme Manager, Reset Communities and Refugees

Amina Khanom is the Programmes Manager at Reset UK, leading on service delivery, MEL, and partnership and policy. She's worked on various community-led welcome pathways in her time with Reset, including Community Sponsorship, Homes for Ukraine, Neighbours for Newcomers, and the COMET project with European partners. Amina has worked in the refugee and asylum sector for the last 10 years for a number of grassroots charities and is a passionate advocate for community-led welcome as a safe and regular route.

Dimitra Kalogeropoulou, Head of Office, International Rescue Committee Hellas

Dimitra Kalogeropoulou is a humanitarian professional with nearly 20 years of experience working with displaced populations across multiple countries. Currently based in Athens and leading the IRC Hellas team since 2020, driving strategic responses to the refugee situation in Greece and advocating for inclusive, locally grounded solutions. Her work reflects a deep commitment to dignity, integration, and long-term impact for displaced people.

Julius Ntobuah, Board Member, Newcomers with Disabilities in Sweden

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, a refugee with disabilities himself, has vast international experience having worked with UNHCR, UNICEF, Läkarmissionen and many other international organizations. Having been a "hjärnkoll" ambassador, he is trained in discussing and lecturing about mental health. 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. He has a certificate from migration and integration studies from Swedish Institute, Gothenburg University and School of Public Administration in Tbilisi, Georgia.

10:15-10:30 – Coffee Break**10:30-12:00 – Parallel Break-out Sessions****Child Protection**

With significant changes to the fundraising landscape, there are new challenges facing national and local NGOs, including organisations led by forcibly displaced and stateless people, who are seeking to carry on advocacy interventions aimed at the betterment of national child protection systems, effective national reception, guardianship and alternative care so that they can effectively include forcibly displaced and stateless children. The session will explore the potential of advocacy interventions of non-government and grassroots organizations on behalf of forcibly displaced and stateless children.

SPEAKERS

Sergii Lavrukhin, Protection Officer – Community-Based Protection, UNHCR RBE

Sergii Lavrukhin joined UNHCR in 2003 and worked in protection and field roles in Ukraine, Georgia, Iraq, South Sudan, Jordan and Afghanistan before joining UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in Geneva, Switzerland. Since 2021, Sergii has been the regional Child Protection focal point, as the part of his wider community-based protection portfolio. This includes providing technical advice to UNHCR operations on pertinent child protection matters, supporting the regional dialogue on protection of children we work with, both internally and with the regional stakeholders and working together on solutions to regional child protection challenges. The Ukrainian refugee crisis, a crisis of family separation as it is referred to by many, has been a particular focus of attention of this work.

Jyothi Kanics, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Kids in Need of Defense Europe

Jyothi Kanics has advocated for refugee and migrant rights since 1995 with organisations such as UNHCR, UNICEF and Save the Children. She has assisted vulnerable migrants, including trafficked persons and unaccompanied children. She is currently Director of Policy and Advocacy for Europe with [Kids in Need of Defense](#) (KIND). KIND seeks to secure safety and fulfil rights for unaccompanied and separated children in Europe through high-quality, free legal and psychosocial assistance, capacity building, and advocacy. Jyothi coordinates KIND's policy advocacy efforts including engaging with the Vulnerability Experts Network of the EU Agency for Asylum and the Council of Europe's Consultation Group on Children of Ukraine. She also serves as an Advisory Committee member of the European Network on Statelessness.

Olsi Dudumi, Regional Children and Youth on the Move Programme Coordinator, Terre des hommes Europe

Olsi Dudumi leads the coordination of Terre des hommes' migration programming across seven European countries with expertise in child protection, migration, youth empowerment, and innovation. Previously at Tdh he has served as Regional Innovation and Youth Empowerment Advisor, leading initiatives like Resilience Innovation Facilities and supporting innovative child and youth on the move-driven solutions. Committed to empowering children and youth affected by migration through strategic programming, innovation, and cross-regional collaboration.

Federica Toscano, Senior Advocacy Advisor, Save the Children Europe

Federica Toscano leads Save the Children's advocacy efforts at the European Union level on issues related to migration, asylum, and displacement. In this capacity, she works to reinforce legal and policy frameworks that safeguard the rights of children and other vulnerable groups across Europe and along key migratory routes. Previously, Federica served as Head of Advocacy at Missing Children Europe, where she championed the rights of children at risk of disappearance as well as those subjected to exploitation and sexual abuse. Her expertise is further informed by prior experience within the EU institutions and by leadership roles in European youth organizations.

Katie Hall, Advocacy Coordinator, Project Play

Katie Hall is Advocacy Lead at Project Play, a grassroots NGO supporting children on the move in northern France, and a PhD researcher on migration, emerging technologies and human-rights based approaches to policy. With a background in playwork and child-led approaches, her work seeks to centre children's voices in ways which challenge Eurocentric narratives in research and advocacy. Katie recently co-authored "We

"Want to Be Safe", a report on violence against children at the UK-France border, which calls for urgent rights-based responses to the harms faced by children and families in border spaces.

Terry Smith, Project Manager, European Guardianship Network

Terry is a qualified registered social worker with an extensive background of working with children in both the statutory and voluntary sectors, particularly those in the migration sector. He is driven to ensure there is respect for the contribution that children make to our societies and communities and a commitment to uphold the rights that children hold. He has a portfolio of work which includes project management; conference facilitation; policy, procedure and guidance writing; engagement with children and young people and training delivery. Work history also includes additional freelance projects for UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children, International Organisation for Migration, The Red Cross and others. He currently works as the Project Manager for the European Guardianship Network.



Gender-Based Violence

This session will delve into the key trends and protection priorities related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in the region. It will foster a collaborative environment where participants can exchange ideas, share experiences, and develop actionable recommendations to combat GBV effectively. Together, we will discuss key questions including: How to renew the focus on localization, with focuses on exploring partnership opportunities, identifying funding challenges and sharing good practices? What scaling up investment in/technical support to women-led organizations and local NGOs engaged in GBV and women empowerment entails? The goal is to create a comprehensive and inclusive strategy that addresses the unique needs and challenges faced by refugee women and girls and the grassroots movements that support them in Europe.

SPEAKERS

Vincent Briard, Senior GBV Officer, UNHCR RBE

Vincent is leading UNHCR's work on gender-based violence (GBV), support to women-led organizations, human trafficking, protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and sexual harassment within the Regional Bureau for Europe. He brings over two decades of experience in humanitarian protection with UNHCR, having worked extensively in West, Central and East Africa, Latin America, and Europe since 2005, with a strong focus on community-based protection, operational and legal protection and GBV. Prior to joining UNHCR, Vincent served as a humanitarian attaché for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and worked with three grass roots NGOs from 2000 to 2005. He holds two master's degrees in international and human rights law and international development studies, as well as a MA from Sciences Po. He also previously lectured at three universities, teaching courses to undergraduate and/or graduate students.

Veronica Teleuca, Coordinator, Moldova National Coalition "Life without Violence"

Since 2015 Veronica is the coordinator of the National Coalition "Life without Violence", Republic of Moldova, a feminist national network of 22 women led organizations working on preventing and combating violence against women. A lawyer, she is holder of a master's degree in clinic psychology and a feminist activist. Her experience includes support and establish feminist organizations, collectives, network and movement development and building, feminist funding, grantmaking and advocacy. Member of the Board of European Network of Women organizations against Violence (WAVE). She believes in the collective power

of feminist organizations to lead and transform their communities, to face the challenges and change the system and to support each other. The network annually supports 5,000+ survivors of violence and has assisted 10,000+ refugees since 2022. It provides comprehensive services, fosters community engagement to promote respect for women and girls. The National Coalition leads in legal reforms, advocacy, and policy development, including ratification of the Istanbul Convention, and organizes major national events. The work of the coalition is underpinned by feminist values and focuses on movement building, education, capacity development, grants for grassroots initiatives, emergency support for survivors, advocacy, and research.

Tetyana Machabeli, Executive Director, Neemia

Tetyana is the Executive Director of Neemia, as well as a gender-based violence expert, Montessori teacher, and Montessori therapist. Neemia (Nehemiah) is a Ukrainian local NGO active in the Zakarpattia region, where it plays a vital role in addressing the growing risks of GBV and domestic violence, especially among internally displaced persons (IDPs) and war-affected communities. As a UNHCR partner, Neemia provides survivor-centred case management for GBV survivors; psychosocial support, legal counselling and referrals; awareness-raising sessions to inform communities about rights and available services; and community-based interventions to challenge harmful gender norms and stereotypes. Their work is particularly important in collective shelters and overcrowded living spaces, where tensions and trauma often lead to psychological and domestic abuse. Neemia also addresses deep-rooted patriarchal norms that discourage survivors from seeking help, offering a safe and supportive environment for women and girls to reclaim their dignity and independence. Neemia works closely with the local social services department. Their support includes two main areas: offering training, and improving the physical spaces where services are delivered.

Maria Bondarenko, Executive Director, Light of Hope

Light of Hope is a leading Ukrainian local NGO based in the Poltava region, operating since 1999. It provides comprehensive social, medical, psychological, and legal services to vulnerable populations, including survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, victims of human trafficking, internally displaced persons (IDPs), people living with HIV/AIDS, drug users, sex workers, and formerly incarcerated individuals. Maria Bondarenko is the Executive Director of the Charity Organization Light of Hope, where she has been working for the past 9 years. She possesses over 15 years of professional experience in project and program management in the fields of social protection and public health. Since 2016, Ms. Bondarenko has been leading the implementation of regional and national projects, managing teams of more than 200 staff members, and ensuring effective cooperation with stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels. In her capacity as Executive Director, she oversees the operation of the Shelter for women and women with children, offering safe accommodation, reintegration support, and trauma-informed care. The Shelter serves as a critical lifeline for women escaping violence, providing counselling, legal aid, and pathways to recovery, as well as the Day Center with a crisis room established by Light of Hope, providing comprehensive support to survivors of violence and other vulnerable groups. Light of Hope also offers a social taxi service for GBV survivors – a much-needed support, especially in rural areas where transportation options are limited.

Aminata Soucko, President, Red Aminata

Aminata Soucko is the president of Red Aminata. Originally from Mali, she has been living in Spain for 11 years. She was the victim of female genital mutilation and early child marriage, which put an end to her

dreams of studying medicine. She summoned the courage to flee these forms of gender-based violence and upon arriving in Spain, succeeded in having her studies recognized and obtained two professional training degrees, including in the area of healthcare. She has since specialized in a social-health approach. Red Aminata provides these main services: support for compliance with health treatments; community nursing care; intercultural mediation in socio-health relations; translation services in social healthcare and; social interventions with an intersectional approach. In addition to its fight for girls' and women's rights, Red Aminata is dedicated to dissemination and awareness-raising through talks, forum participation, documentary filmmaking, and women's testimonies. It offers training activities including workshops and courses.



Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Mental health and well-being are central to sustainable responses and resilience. This interactive session will provide a supportive space for NGOs and UNHCR to share priorities, challenges and emerging practices related to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in the current environment. Together we will explore how MHPSS can be more effectively integrated across sectors – such as legal aid, education, and livelihoods – and how NGOs and refugee led organisations play a key role in advancing community-based, intersectoral approaches. Given ongoing funding constraints, the session will also focus on effective language and framing to advocate for MHPSS in protection planning and resource mobilisation, while reinforcing its role as core to protection outcomes and durable solutions.

SPEAKERS

Sofia Casas, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Officer, UNHCR RBE

Sofia Casas currently serves as the regional MHPSS officer for Europe and has over a decade of experience in community-based mental health and psychosocial support in low-resource and crisis settings. Her work centers on rights-based, resilience-informed approaches to clinical and community MHPSS. A licensed psychotherapist with a background in international relations and development, she has served as a clinician, advisor, and trainer across the U.S., East Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.

Camilla Lodi, Global Psychosocial Support Head of Unit, Norwegian Refugee Council

Camilla Lodi spearheads the expansion of NRC's classroom-based psychosocial support Better Learning Programme (BLP) across more than 30 country offices as part of the Right to Wellbeing 2025 and the Together for Wellbeing 2030 initiatives. With a career spanning twenty-five years, she is an Education Specialist with extensive experience in managing large and complex social protection and education programs worldwide. Camilla began her journey with NRC in 2007 in Burundi, followed by impactful roles in Liberia, Somalia, Jordan, and Palestine. She currently leads the global BLP unit, providing technical support to countries affected by protracted and acute conflict and facilitating the implementation of BLP initiatives in both formal and non-formal education settings. She has been actively engaged in international forums advocating for high-quality education, psychosocial support, and social-emotional learning for vulnerable populations, particularly children and youth. Through her work, Camilla contributes to the broader realization of their rights in challenging environments, leaving a lasting impact on communities worldwide.

Pieter Ventevogel, Senior Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Specialist, UNHCR

Peter is a psychiatrist and medical anthropologist from the Netherlands. He has over 23 years of experience in programming for mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for populations affected by violence and displacement. From 2009 to 2013, he served as Editor-in-Chief of Intervention, the Journal of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Conflict Affected Areas. Since 2013, Peter has been working with the Public Health Section of UNHCR as their Senior MHPSS Specialist, supporting UNHCR operations worldwide through missions and developing guidance. He has also played a pivotal role in fostering interagency consensus and guidance on humanitarian MHPSS in emergencies, including through the IASC Reference Group for MHPSS and Sphere Standards. Additionally, he has significantly contributed to clinical tools in global mental health, such as the mhGAP Humanitarian Intervention Guide.

12:00-12:30 – Feedback to Plenary**SPEAKERS****Nataliia Prokopchuk, Senior External Engagement Coordinator, UNHCR RBE**

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.

12:30-13:30 – Lunch Break**13:30-14:30 – Sustainable Responses**

This session aims to update NGOs on UNHCR's Sustainable Responses approach, and zooming into 4 relevant operationalizing topics in Europe – enhancing access to social protection; strengthening self-reliance through decent work and financial inclusion; localization strategy involving municipal engagement and access to finance and; socio-economic data and statistical inclusion. During the session, we will touch on strategic engagement with development actors, the private sector, national and local governments and regional bodies. We will also discuss how collaboration with NGOs, refugee-led organizations, and internally displaced-led initiatives can be enhanced to ensure the Sustainable Responses approach remains protection-oriented, context-specific, relevant and inclusive.

SPEAKERS**Susanne Klink, Senior Development Officer, UNHCR RBE**

Susanne Klink is leading UNHCR's work on refugees' socio-economic inclusion, integration and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Europe since January 2020. She has been working on

solutions, 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.

Steven Bunce, Regional Integration Officer, UNHCR RBE

Steven Bunce is Integration Officer at UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe, where he has served since 2022. He has worked on socio-economic inclusion and durable solutions for refugees and internally displaced persons since 2013 through different assignments in El Salvador, Mexico and Colombia. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Sydney.

14:30-15:30 – Navigating an uncertain funding environment

This session will focus on how to better support NGOs when it comes to resource mobilization. UNHCR will update on how global financial cuts are impacting UNHCR and its priorities in light of the current funding landscape. Building on this, the session will facilitate the discussion on how NGOs are impacted, how they maintain donor interest and how they adapt to the new funding realities. Drawing on that, we aim to identify areas for capacity strengthening and good practices sharing between UNHCR and NGOs in navigating uncertain funding environments.

SPEAKERS

Pia Paguio, Associate Head of Service, Donor Relations & Resource Mobilization Service, 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.

Hugo Reichenberger, Donor Relations Officer, UNHCR RBE

Hugo Reichenberger has been working with UNHCR for 15 years since he started as an intern in the UNHCR Brazil managing a case of resettled Iraqi refugees. Since 2008, his work with UNHCR has taken him to HQ, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Chad, Myanmar, Ukraine and Mozambique. He has been working in both the field of protection, as a Resettlement Officer in Chad for four Darfuri refugee camps, in Myanmar working Rohingya population in Rakhine State and more recently as Senior Protection Cluster in Mozambique coordinating the response of over 30 NGO partners (both national and international) to both climate and conflict induced displacement. Hugo also brings experience in the field of External Relations, more specifically in fundraising for protection and humanitarian responses in Burkina Faso, Central African Republic, Ukraine and now in the regional bureau for Europe in Geneva. He has earned a

B.A. in International Affairs and a M.A. in Sustainable International Development. He is passionate about community-based protection, localization, and fundraising.

Justin O'Shaughnessy, Reporting Officer, UNHCR RBE

Justin O'Shaughnessy has worked for the UN for 10 years, since starting with the Prosecutor's Office at the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Hague. Since 2018, he has worked for UNHCR in its Regional Bureaux, covering emergencies and protracted displacement crises across the Middle East, North Africa, as well as Europe. This includes Reporting and External Relations functions focusing on Syria Situation, Yemen, Libya and Western Sahara. He also has taken part in extended emergency deployments to support the inter-agency Ukraine refugee response at the beginning of the full-scale war in 2022. Justin also covers resource mobilization activities, generating funding and interest for UNHCR operations globally, including from the private sector. He has earned a L.L.B in Law, as well as an L.L.M in International Law. He is passionate about human rights, asylum and criminal justice.

Ruben Fierens, Private Partnerships and Philanthropy Officer, UNHCR

Ruben Fierens began his career with UNHCR working in various protection teams in Belgium, Somalia, and Kenya, before transitioning to private sector partnerships (PSP). In this capacity, he has served in Belgium as Head of Fundraising and in Italy as Partnerships & Philanthropy Officer in PSP Europe. In both roles, he focused on mobilizing corporate and foundation support to advance UNHCR's humanitarian efforts. In addition to his career with UNHCR, Ruben also worked for ECRE, the European Council on Refugees & Exiles in Brussels as a legal officer.

15:30-16:00 – Coffee Break

16:00-17:00 – GRF Progress Review: Taking Stock of Civil Society Engagement in the GCR

The High-Level Official Meeting (HLOM) is the main Stocktaking event under the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) to track progress of pledges, mostly made in the context of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF). In the current humanitarian context, the HLOM plays a crucial role by tracking progress and highlighting good practices and thus providing momentum to outline the achieved impact towards the GCR objectives. The whole-of-society approach is a key implementation principle aimed at ensuring inclusive and sustainable refugee responses. Among all actors, civil society – including local NGOs, community-based organizations, volunteer networks, and refugee-led initiatives – has played a vital role in advancing the GCR mechanisms and pledges. In the latest GRF Progress Review, civil society's contributions were widely acknowledged. In the lead up to the HLOM – GRF Progress Review 2025, civil society actors are again encouraged to provide reporting and updates on both individual pledges as well as pledges made under the Multi-Stakeholder Pledges to contribute to the GCR Stocktaking process.

SPEAKERS

Nicolas Brass, Senior Policy Adviser and Head of the Global Compact for Refugees Coordination Team, UNHCR

Nicolas Brass is a Senior Policy Adviser and the Head of the Global Compact for Refugees Coordination Team at UNHCR. His career spans over two decades of dedicated service in the humanitarian-development-political sector, including both headquarters and extensive field experience. With UNHCR,

Nicolas has worked on strategic partnerships, inter-agency coordination as well as external and donor relations in Ethiopia, Sudan, Thailand, and Geneva.

Reshma Adatia, Director of Engagement, ICVA

Reshma has over 20 years of experience in the international aid sector, having worked in Canada and abroad. Her most recent role was as the International Operations Coordinator and Head of the Humanitarian Diplomacy Team at Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF). In this capacity, she chaired the International Platform of MSF Operational Directors, facilitating strategic operational discussions. As head of the Humanitarian Diplomacy Team, Reshma led a diverse group of representatives to ensure alignment between humanitarian efforts and operational priorities. Prior to this, Reshma was the Global Humanitarian Coordinator for the ACT Alliance, where she focused on global advocacy and policy positioning. She managed the Emergency Response Mechanism, emphasizing direct funding to local and national responders. Additionally, she supported the development of the first Humanitarian Encyclopedia through a collaborative project with the Centre for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action. Reshma's field experience with MSF included 8 years in Project Coordination and Country Management roles in countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Iraq, and Yemen. She also spent 2 years at MSF's headquarters in Amsterdam, overseeing operations in Ethiopia, Myanmar, Yemen, Syria, Nigeria, Jordan, and Turkey.

Apostolos Veizis, Executive Director, INTERSOS HELLAS

Dr. Apostolos Veizis, currently coordinating the work of INTERSOS HELLAS in Greece as Executive Director, leverages decades of global experience in humanitarian aid and refugee healthcare. He has previously worked at the HQ of Medecins Sans Frontieres-Greece as Director of Medical Operational Support Unit, Programs and Institutional Relations Director and Medical Director. Dr. Veizis also worked as the Head of Mission and Medical Coordinator for Medecins Sans Frontieres and Medecins Du Monde in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russian Federation, Albania, Egypt, Georgia, Greece, Turkey. Dr. Veizis' consultancy work includes consultancy work with the World Health Organization (WHO) and International Organization for Migration (IOM). He also teaches as a guest lecturer at many universities on topics of humanitarian aid and migration and health.

Andrea Núñez-Flores Rey, Senior Humanitarian Advocacy Adviser, Save the Children

Andrea Núñez-Flores Rey is a senior humanitarian professional and human rights advocate, with extensive experience advancing transformative agendas on humanitarian diplomacy, protection, and gender equality. She has held strategic roles with Save the Children International, Plan International, and UNICEF, contributing to policy change and advocacy at country, regional, and global levels. Currently serving as Senior Humanitarian Advocacy Adviser at Save the Children International, Andrea leads high-level advocacy and policy engagement to influence the global humanitarian system and improve outcomes for children in emergencies. Andrea holds two master's degrees - in Journalism and International Humanitarian Action - and is fluent in English, French, and Spanish.

Cecilia Vejby Andersen, Head of Unit - Global & EU Asylum, Danish Refugee Council

Cecilia Vejby Andersen is Head of Global & EU Asylum unit with the Asylum & Refugee Rights Division at DRC Danish Refugee Council. The team provides legal representation to asylum seekers in the Danish Dublin procedure, engages in analysis and advocacy on EU asylum law, and provides advisory capacity to DRCs global legal aid efforts. Before that Cecilia worked for several years as a legal advisor for asylum

seekers in the Danish asylum procedure. Cecilia is focal point and core group member for DRCs engagement in the GRF Legal Community pledge.

Abdelaziz Muhamat, Refugee Advocacy Coordinator, Global Detention Project

Abdul Aziz Muhamat is a Sudanese refugee and human rights advocate for migrants and refugees. Currently he is the Refugee Advocacy Coordinator at the Global Detention Project in Geneva. He is the 2019 Laureate of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders, a UN Fellow at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and a former recipient of the ISHR Human Rights Defenders Fellowship. He is involved in social work, advocacy, and is authoring in collaboration with other refugees offshore and inshore *They Can't Take The Sky*. Abdul Aziz became a beacon of hope by courageously exposing the human rights violations committed by Australian authorities on Nauru and Manus islands.

17:00-17:15 – Closing Remarks

SPEAKERS

Paul Olaf Stromberg, Bureau Deputy Director, UNHCR RBE

Paul Stromberg joined UNHCR in 1994 and is currently the Deputy Director of the Europe region based in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to taking up his current post he was Deputy Director of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, based in Amman, Jordan. He also led the organization's Head of the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization (DRRM) service (2017-2022) and was assigned as UNHCR's Deputy Representative in Jordan (2013-2017) and Syria (2010-2012). He was Chief of UNHCR's Field Safety Section (2008-2010), and Special Assistant to the High Commissioner (2004-2008). Mr. Stromberg has held various positions in Afghanistan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya and Rwanda, as well as on numerous emergency missions. Mr. Stromberg is a graduate of Wheaton College and the University of Chicago.