

Meeting Minutes

Communications Task Force for Ukraine Refugee Response in Romania

Friday, 15 March 2024

UNHCR Conference Room,
Strada Alexandrina 20-22, Bucharest

On 15 March, UNHCR- as lead of the Communications Task Force, organized an inaugural meeting of the Task Force, under the umbrella of the Inter-agency network for the refugee response in Romania. More than 40 participants from authorities, embassies, and partners implementing the Refugee Response Plan (RRP) attended the meeting. Three researchers, Mr. Remus Stefureac, Ms. Oana Popescu Zamfir, Mr. Mircea Toma, presented their insights on the public narratives around the Ukraine refugee situation. The Communications Task Force – within the RRP coordination structure – aims at analyzing the public discourse related to refugees from Ukraine and work collectively towards promoting social cohesion.

UNHCR Representative in Romania Mr. Pablo Zapata opened the meeting and briefed participants about objectives of the Communications Task Force, with reference to the [findings](#) of the poll conducted by the European Council on Foreign Relations that indicates that 35 per cent Romanian people considered the Ukrainian refugees as threats.

Remarks were delivered by Ms. Victoria Stoiciu, Counsellor of State, Prime-Minister's Chancellery and by Mr. Mihai Lupu from the Department for Emergency Situations. Both remarks emphasized on the importance of the task force, particularly since the protracted situation in Ukraine.

Mr. Alberto Bolzan, UNHCR External Relations Officer chaired the meeting and introduced by key-note speakers for the event.

- Mr. Remus Stefureac, CEO and Founder of INSCOP Research shared an overview of public opinion on matters impacting refugees from Ukraine. During the presentation, Mr. Stefureac shared opinions on issues relating to the war in Ukraine expressed by the Romanian people. ([Presentation is attached](#)).
- Ms. Oana Popescu Zamfir, Director of Global Focus shared an overview of different interests of the media, politicians, and the public. Ms. Popescu highlighted the prevailing confusion and trust deficiency of the people of Romania towards the information sources in the country.
- Mr. Mircea Toma, Member of the National Audiovisual Council drew reference to a recent incident and warned that disinformation can distort the perception of Romanians. Mr. Toma informed about the legislative initiative to combat disinformation and indicated a lack of consultation in that initiative. He shared an overview of the public narrative of the Ukraine situation and how it is reflected in the media landscape of Romania.

Presentations by the experts were followed by an open discussion among participants and members of the Communications Task Force.

At the end of the meeting, the Chairperson informed that the draft *Terms of Reference* of the Task Force were disseminated with the invitation to the event and invited comments to be submitted by [COB Wednesday 20 March](#) with UNHCR and the Inter-Agency team (Alberto Bolzan, External Relations Officer and Sebastiaan Der Kinderen, Senior Inter-Agency Coordinator). In addition, UNHCR invited members to express their interest in becoming a co-leading organization of the Communications Task Force by 20 March. The date for the next meeting of the Communications Task Force is to be determined.