

**Minutes of Protection Working Group
27th February 2024**

Place: UN House – Bucharest (hybrid format)

Facilitators: Jorunn Brandvoll, UNHCR; Bogdan Preda, CNRR

30 participants

1. Presentation Draft Workplan
2. Presentation and discussion of area-based assessments (Cluj, Brasov, Galati)
3. Presentation of Intention Survey
4. AOB

1. Workplan Discussion:

- A draft workplan based on last month’s discussions was presented for further input. Unicef proposed to have joint guidance on safe spaces at border in case they may be needed again in the future.
- Discussion evolves around on how to strengthen member organizations’ inclusion, in their work, of people living with disabilities. The coordination will need to find out if national authorities could provide guidance on disability inclusion. A specific meeting on people living with disabilities could be held in the future inviting responsible authorities to provide information on certification issues and present the related guidance materials which have been developed with the support of UNHCR.
- Dentons is mentioned as an entity that could provide guidance as to the inclusion of persons from the LGBTQ+ community.
- Reference is also made to the National Association of the Deaf and a brochure they recently developed for humanitarian workers on how to communicate with people with a hearing impairment that could be presented to the members.
- Coordinators inform that the draft workplan will be shared with all to add any further products or activities that should be included and for organizations to sign up in leading specific activities.

2. Presentation of three are-based assessments:

- UNHCR presents a comparative analysis of three area-based assessments - Cluj, Brasov, Galati – reflecting the profile and protection situation of the Ukrainian population living in these three locations. **The presentation is shared to together with these minutes.**
- During the discussion, UNHCR confirms that the respective reports are published on the data portal. The sample used is a purposive sample.
- The full assessments can be accessed here:
 - <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105635>
 - <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105289>
 - <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/105634>

- In the ensuing discussion one participant shares that hostile attitudes towards the Ukrainian population have increased whereas, when people are asked about the reasons for having hostile attitudes, these are related to perceptions.
- The discussion also turns around significant differences, e.g. in the per centage of families which have been separated, from one place to the other. It is speculated that possibly Cluj and Brasov may represent cities which are chosen by the population and that people who decide to move there may be in a better economic situation than people fleeing to other locations.
- Members are encouraged to read the three reports and particularly look at employment levels, level of income and other sociodemographic data.
- Suceava and Constanta are tentative cities for area-based assessments in 2024. The suggestion is made to UNHCR to also include Sibiu or Vulcea to get a more complete picture.
- Different organizations mention other studies which have been conducted and, with regard to findings on social cohesion, the proposal is made to identify 2-3 key messages that evolve from all surveys and inform the joint advocacy. On separated families, the WHO has carried out a needs assessment. At country level, around 50 per cent of families are separated according to UNHCR data countrywide. UNICEF has carried out a 3rd round on its social cohesion study, the findings of which were shared recently at the inter-sectorial meeting and could be shared again if needed. Members propose that, from the IM coordination side, a mechanism is in place through which organizations inform about the assessments they are planning to carry out. The Romanian Red Cross has also carried out a recent study which would be interesting to share.

3. Intention survey:

- The Coordination presents a UNHCR study carried out in mid-2023 on the intentions to return back home of refugees from Ukraine, all over Europe. Many surveys were carried out in Romania. The end result was however weighted proportionate to number of people. Globally, 39% of refugees have at least visited Ukraine once while 35 % have not been able to visit. Main reasons for refugees to visit Ukraine are 1. Visit relatives, 2. Get documentation and 3. Access healthcare. Participants are encouraged to look at, for example, differences as to how people consider the idea of returning depending on household types and area of origin. The PPT is shared together with these minutes. The full intention survey can be accessed here: <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/101747>
- UNHCR makes reference to its last year guidance on voluntary return of Ukrainians which is shared with members in the chat.

4. AOB:

- Terre des Hommes informs that it has launched a Handbook on Romanian language teaching to children.

5. Action Points:

What needs to be done	By who	By when
Review and sign up for workplan	All	12 th March 24
Organize a thematic session on persons living with a disability	Coordination	tbc
Share reports of area-based assessments	Coordination	5 March 24
Consider including Sibiu or Vulcea in next area-based assessments	Coordination/ to propose to IM	Tbc