





A Conversation with and about Syrian refugees

Real-time engagement with Syrian individuals in Türkiye and Lebanon

On February 22, 2024, members of Upinion's Syrian community from Lebanon and Türkiye participated as online panelists in a hybrid event at the Humanity Hub in The Hague, focusing on the situation of Syrian individuals in their host countries. The event explored various topics related to the experiences, needs, conditions, and prospects of Syrians in Lebanon, Türkiye, and the Netherlands. Alongside other panelists, Upinion presented ideas and insights gathered from its communities through prior polling questions via Upinion's platform, and in real-time via YouTube comments. Let's explore the perspectives of Upinion's communities on the event below!

Who joined us online?

-  **42**
Syrian individuals from **Lebanon**
-  **60**
Syrian individuals from **Türkiye**

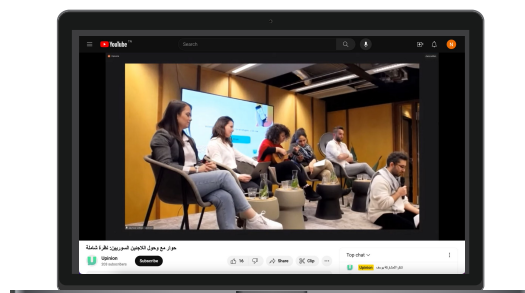
mentioned they listened in for **more than 20 minutes**.

The Syrian community members in Lebanon who could not join, mentioned it was mostly due to not having internet credit (**52%**, n=131) or having unstable internet (**26%**). People in Türkiye mostly mentioned they did not have time to join the event (**42%**, n=182), followed by not having enough internet credit (**24%**).



Community feedback Representation

Most of the participating community members (**78%**, n=86) noted that Upinion either **strongly represented (30%)** or somewhat represented (**48%**) the **experiences and concerns** of their community. A big group also mentioned they prefer not to answer (**16%**).



5% mentioned they did not think their experiences and concerns were well-represented. Digital communication with this group is maintained to clarify Upinion's role in amplifying their voices and investigating better ways for increased participation.



Raising awareness

The large majority of the participating community members (**76%**, n=81) said the event **increased awareness** and understanding of the situation of Syrian refugees in their host countries, to some extent (**46%**) or quite effectively (**30%**). **15%** mentioned the event did not contribute to an increased awareness.



DO's and DON'Ts for future real-time engagement

Drawing from this and additional community input, Upinion has condensed key insights into actionable **DO's and DON'Ts for online community engagement**. These points serve as guiding principles for future initiatives:

DO's:

- **Explore methods of direct engagement**, while guaranteeing people's anonymity if they prefer to.
- **Proactively address connectivity issues** by exploring solutions such as providing internet credits ahead of events.
- **Avoid using complex jargon** that might disrupt delivery to community members. Communicate in clear, understandable language and dialects, either through interpretation or directly.
- **Be transparent** about the scope of the event and manage community members' expectations effectively.

- **Emphasise significance and (potential) impact of affected individuals' engagement.** If the impact of the event is not yet evident, ensure to acknowledge this, too.
- **Increase involvement of affected people in advocacy meetings**, for example with the EU donors or international humanitarian organisations like the UNHCR.

DON'Ts:

- **Overlook representation.** Strive for balanced representativeness across different demographic groups.
- **Ignore community input.** Recognise and integrate suggestions from community members to enhance future engagements.

What to do next?

At Upinion, we are dedicated to enhancing the digital engagement of our communities, both within and beyond the scope of events like these.

Let's talk further and see how we can address these needs and ensure meaningful participation for affected communities. Please contact us at info@upinion.com.