

European Council on Refugees and Exile's Pledges at the Global Refugee Forum

In ECRE's view, the Global Refugee Forum is an important opportunity for the EU to demonstrate that it is committed to implementing the GCR and to sharing responsibility for welcoming and supporting refugees, including by ensuring protection for refugees both within and outside Europe.. ECRE will be making pledges in the following three areas: Solutions; Jobs and Livelihoods; Protection Capacity

1) Solutions: Push for rights based European asylum policy

ECRE's advocacy seeks to influence government policy and practice affecting refugee rights in Europe and in Europe's external policies. ECRE focuses on both developing alternatives to the status quo and on countering proposals which do not respect the rights of refugees in all of the areas covered by the area of focus on Solutions (Voluntary Repatriation; Resettlement and Complementary Pathways and Local Solutions).

Ahead of the next GRF in 2023, ECRE pledges the following:

- 1) Influence any review of EU return legislation to ensure rights compliance and prioritise voluntary, dignified and safe returns
- 2) Demand an increase of safe and legal pathways to Europe and where appropriate engage in Europe wide campaigns on this issue
- 3) Advance at least one concrete recommendations on support to inclusion of refugees in Europe related to a) funding priorities and b) policy framework

2) Jobs and Livelihoods: Inclusion of refugees throughout all of ECRE's work (Staff, Board members and ECRE membership)

In line with objectives of the GCR, refugees, asylum seekers and other forcibly displaced people should be at the centre when policies that affect their lives are being developed. It is therefore vital that refugee rights organisations such as ECRE include refugee advocates and refugee-led organisations in all areas of their work. This is essential to ensure rights based policy that includes and empowers refugees. It is also necessary for the overall credibility of the refugee rights sector which should practice what it preaches.

ECRE is committed to refugee inclusion in all its work. It has adapted its recruitment process accordingly and since 2017 the figure has been consistently between 20% and 35% of staff with a refugee background; refugee advocates participated in all ECRE events and activities. The ECRE Board includes a representative of a refugee-led organisations and the number of refugee-led organisations who have joined ECRE's membership has increased substantially. Refugee advocates participated in all ECRE events and activities and ECRE has put aside funding to support this.

Ahead of the next GRF in 2023, ECRE pledges the following:

- 1) Increase and maintain staff percentage with refugee background at 35%

- 2) Expand membership of refugee-led organisations to 20% of ECRE's membership
- 3) Maintain continuous representation of refugee-led organisations in ECRE's Board

3) Protection Capacity: Promoting compliance with asylum legislation through research and legal support

ECRE provides thorough and authoritative analysis of EU asylum law with a particular focus on the implementation and reform of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) as part of the Asylum Information Database (AIDA) which provides detailed comparative analysis of asylum systems in 23 countries. Through AIDA, ECRE provides up-to-date information on (a) asylum procedures, (b) reception conditions, (c) detention and (d) content of international protection in European countries, thereby supporting compliance with legislation and evidence based policy debate on protection in Europe.

ECRE's legal support and strategic litigation aims to support asylum seekers and refugees to access their rights through the courts and to effect deeper legal changes through litigation. ECRE is in charge of running the European Database of Asylum Law (EDAL), an online database compiling summaries of asylum case law from the courts of 22 European states, the Court of Justice of the EU (CJEU) and the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR). EDAL is an invaluable resource, frequently consulted and cited by courts and lawyers in Europe.

Ahead of the next GRF in 2023, ECRE pledges the following:

- 1) Maintain AIDA coverage of 23 European countries
- 2) Maintain EDAL coverage to 22 European countries