

*Organised by UNHCR, the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), regional Dialogues with NGOs aim at ensuring regular and two-way communication between UNHCR and NGOs in Europe on topics of common interest, as well as identifying areas for joint and complementary advocacy.*

## Agenda

## Participants:

**Item 1:** Working together: responses to the proposed Pact  
**Item 2:** The Pact – the state of play for the EU Institutions

- 41 participating NGOs, including ACT alliance, Action against Hunger, Amnesty International, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights, Border Violence Monitoring Network, Caritas Europe, Caritas Sweden, Bundesverband Netzwerke von Migrantenorganisationen, Centre for Peace Studies, Center for capacity building and empowerment, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe, Crisis Response and Policy Centre, Croatian Law Centre, Danish Refugee Council, Dutch Council for Refugees, ECRE, European Network of Migrant Women, European Network on Statelessness, France Terre d'Asile, Fundacion Cepaim, Greek Council for Refugees, Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, ICVA, International Cities of Refuge Network, International Rescue Committee, INTERSOS, Jesuit Refugee Service, Legal-Informational Centre for NGOs, Médecins sans Frontières, Menedek, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, PICUM, Portuguese Refugee Council, Refugees International, Save the Children, Solentra, Stichting Vluchteling, Swedish Refugee Law Center and Young Republic

- UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe, UNHCR Representation for EU Affairs, UNHCR Partnership and Coordination Service and UNHCR Division of Strategic Planning and Results

- MEP Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chair of the LIBE Committee, European Parliament; Henrik Nielsen, Head of the Asylum Unit, DG Home, European Commission; and Nataša Potočnik, Director General, Directorate for Migration, Ministry of the Interior, Slovenia, The Council Presidency

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## 1. Key points discussed

In the first session, participants shared their views on the Pact, highlighting estimated strengths and weaknesses in ensuring an effective access to protection and solutions for those in need of protection in the region. Discussions also revolved around possible avenues for joint and/or coordinated UNHCR-NGO action on key EU-related issues, from protection challenges (including push-backs and negative discourses on refugees) to policy proposals (such as the estimated lack of systematic evidence-base, solidarity mechanisms, and resettlement).

EU policy makers took the floor in the second session to provide an update on the current state of the negotiations of the Pact, highlighting progress made and remaining challenges. In response, NGO participants sought EU policy makers' views on the current commitments of EU Member States to a common asylum system, their approach to solidarity mechanisms and the application of screening procedures to children.

## 2. Opportunities for enhanced UNHCR-NGO collaboration

UNHCR and NGOs suggested to enhance collaboration with regard to:

- the generation of an **evidence-base** on protection and solution for refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people in Europe to inform policy-makers;
- national **independent monitoring mechanisms**, which require coordinated support from UNHCR and NGOs;
- the necessary contribution to a **positive public discourse** on refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless people in Europe;
- the implementation of the pledges made at the **2019 Global Refugee Forum**, including through the next milestone - the High-Level Officials Meeting, to be held on 14-15 December 2021;
- advocacy on access to **resettlement** with key Government counterparts following the July 9 *High-Level Forum on Resettlement & Refugee Protection*;
- **strategic litigation** on protection and solutions for refugees and stateless people through information-sharing between UNHCR and NGOs;
- **Search and Rescue operations**, ensuring regular information-sharing between UNHCR, NGOs and other key actors;
- the future launch of an **EU Agency for Asylum (transformation of EASO)**.