



**Annual General Conference 2018**  
Belgrade, 7-9 November 2018

**Workshop 3 – European Parliament elections**  
**Forum Room**

### Facilitators

Villads Zahle and Josephine Liebl, ECRE

### Background

The upcoming European Parliament elections play a vital role in the political discourse around the EU with the risk of large electoral gains for far-rights and anti-migrant parties and it will have a severe impact on the asylum and migration policies in the EU. ECRE is running a campaign on European Parliament elections which aims to influence political party manifestos and programmes, to intervene in public debates and mobilize of progressive voters particularly people with refugee backgrounds to vote in the elections. A big component of our public campaign under the #YourVoteOurFuture is to highlight that in many instances, the people who are most likely to suffer from restrictive asylum and migration policy do not have the chance to participate in the elections. Therefore, ECRE believes that mobilization of citizens with refugee background is essential so that they can participate in the political process, make sure they are well represented and have their voice heard. To this end ECRE is aiming to reach out to a broad network of refugee leaders/activists and refugee led-organizations in EU Member States.

ECRE's approach is non-partisan: it is not proposing which party to vote for or campaigning for particular parties at European or national level. Its objectives are rather to inform people with refugee backgrounds of the importance of the European Parliament for the rights of refugees; providing information on the importance of the composition of the Parliament and the risk of increased extreme right MEPs; and encouraging those supportive of refugee rights to vote.

After the European Parliament elections, ECRE is planning to approach MEPs, establish or further develop contact and use the hearing of candidates for European Commissioner post to either a) highlight priority issues for ECRE and/or b) avoid an appointment which could be harmful for refugee rights.

### Objectives

1. Present and discuss ECRE's advocacy and campaign plans related to the EP elections
2. Discuss possibilities for engagement of ECRE members and other organisations in the EP campaign
3. Discuss the challenge of including voices of people with refugee background in campaigning and how to address them

### Agenda

This will be an interactive workshop with initial contributions by the ECRE team working on the EP advocacy and campaign plans.

11h30: Presentation of ECRE's advocacy approach ahead and after the EP elections

11h45: Presentation of ECRE's campaign activities ahead of the EP elections

12h15: Questions and discussion

13h15: Wrap up and summary of next steps