

Roundtable: A new era for refugee protection in Europe?

The Pact and beyond: opportunities seized or squandered?

24 September, 2020, 10h00-12h30

Press Club Brussels, Rue Froissart 95, 1040 Brussels (with COVID-related precautions)

Practical Information:

COVID-related health and safety measures will be in place, with social distancing in the room. All participants in the audience will be requested to wear a mask except when speaking.

When arriving, please give your name at the registration table and you will be signed in by the organisers.

Designer masks will be available for a donation – all profits to assist vulnerable migrants.

09h30 onwards: registration

10h00 – 11h00 Session I: The Pact on Asylum and Migration and beyond – state of play and future perspectives

After some years when asylum and migration have been addressed in a crisis mode, the new Pact on Asylum and Migration will be published on 23 September. It is an opportunity for the EU and its Member States to change direction. Will the Pact attain this objective?

Beyond the Pact, what are the other priorities for the EU in the domain of asylum and migration? Analysis of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) shows implementation gaps and deliberate, serious flouting of the law, particularly in regard to access to territory and the procedure. The COVID-related emergency has exacerbated and accelerated the use of restrictive measures but has also led to – albeit limited – positive changes.

In this context, what are the asylum and migration priorities for the German Presidency? How do priorities and positions on the Pact and legislation differ across the Member States? What is UNHCR's preliminary assessment of the Pact? What opportunities and needs do civil society, including refugee advocates, identify? With this session we aim to answer these questions and to get a general overview of the political agenda for the coming year on asylum and migration.

Chair: Catherine Woollard, ECRE

- Rudolf Roy, JHA Head of Department, Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU
- European Commission perspective (speaker tbc)
- UNHCR's views: Sophie Magennis, Head of the PLUS Unit, UNHCR Representation for EU Affairs

Questions and comments from the floor

11h00 – 11h15 Break

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During the break there will be a screening of campaign videos and sign up to the campaign:

Human Rights Compliance – Hardly Rocket Science

#HardlyRocketScience

11h15 – 12h30 Session II: The Pact, and the reform of the Common European Asylum System? Civil society perspectives

The Pact lays the groundwork for a package of legislation in asylum and migration law; the raft of legislative proposals presented between 2016 and 2018, have been withdrawn, amended or will progress based on previous inter-institutional agreements.

What are the objectives of reforming the CEAS? How does reform relate to implementation? What are the new legislative solutions that accompany the Pact? Which reforms enhance protection and which undermine it? How did the co-legislators respond in 2016 and what approach is planned for negotiations on the next round of proposals? How have the politics changed since the 2016 round?

This session will provide an opportunity for civil society representatives to share their plans and strategies on the Pact and other priorities. All participants are welcome to contribute to the discussions.

Chair: Anaïs Faure Atger, Red Cross EU Office

- Civil society's assessment – Shaza Alrihawi, Global Refugee-led Network
- Compliance and/or reform? Petra Baeyens, ECRE
- Preliminary assessment – Hala Akari, Swedish Syrian Association
- Interactive discussion with all participants welcome to contribute.