



Job Title: (Junior) Legal Officer – EU Asylum Law

Job purpose: to deliver part of ECRE's advocacy work on EU asylum law.

ECRE is an alliance of 128 NGOs in 40 European countries which works to defend and promote the rights of refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons in Europe and in European external policies. ECRE has existed for more than 50 years but there has never been a greater need for its work.

ECRE is currently seeking a (Junior) Legal Officer – EU Asylum Law. The position will be appointed at either Junior Legal Officer or Legal Officer level, depending on experience, with work responsibilities adjusted accordingly. Thus, candidates matching the profile of either Junior Legal Officer or Legal Officer are welcome to apply.

The position holder will play an important role in developing and managing ECRE's legal and political advocacy work on the EU asylum acquis. The work aims to influence the EU's legal framework on asylum and its implementation in the EU Member States and associated countries. As well as sound legal knowledge, the position-holder needs to have good political instincts. The position-holder will work closely with ECRE's large and diverse membership.

Start date: January 2025

Line management: Reports to the Senior Legal Officer (SLO)

Place in ECRE: the (Junior) Legal Officer will be part of ECRE's advocacy team, working with the SLO, Head of Advocacy and other policy officers.

Key Responsibilities

The (Junior) Legal Officer – EU Asylum Law will deliver the following specific tasks:

1. To support ECRE's work on and with the EU Asylum Agency

The (Junior) Legal Officer will support ECRE's work on and with the EU Asylum Agency (EUAA), which is one part of ECRE's advocacy on the implementation of the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). This will include, first, participating in EUAA events and monitoring the activities of the EUAA and preparing research, analysis and recommendations on how the EUAA can contribute to functioning asylum systems in Europe. This will include the implementation of the new mandate based on the legal instrument. Second, the (Junior) Legal Officer will provide expertise and administrative support in relation to contracts that ECRE has with the EUAA.

2. To support ECRE's work on elements of the Common European Asylum System

The (Junior) Legal Officer will support ECRE's work on the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), with a focus on one element of the asylum reform, to be decided with the SLO. This will include monitoring compliance and provision of legal analysis. They will work closely with colleagues covering other elements of the legal framework and the reform package. Topics and initiatives may be added depending on the level of appointment and the expertise demonstrated by the (Junior) Legal Officer and opportunities identified by the SLO, and ECRE's organisational needs.

3. Monitoring compliance with EU law – work of the AIDA database

The (Junior) Legal Officer will work on the Asylum Information Database (AIDA) which entails the production of country reports on asylum systems for the 23 countries that are part of the database. Country reports are produced by national experts and reviewed to ensure quality by ECRE staff Members and by expert consultants. Tasks will include reviewing certain updates prepared by national experts, liaising with expert consultants, identifying and extracting information for use in advocacy, organisation of coordination meetings and other communication with the national experts, and management of the grants supporting the AIDA database.

4. Fundraising and grant management

The (Junior) Legal Officer will support the SLO in the management of grants from the EU and other donors that support the AIDA project, including preparation of reports and submission of deliverables , and preparation of funding applications.

5. Work with ECRE teams; accountability to Board, members and donors

ECRE's work is divided into three areas, (1) Legal Support/Litigation, (2) Advocacy and (3) Communications. The (Junior) Legal Officer will be part of the advocacy team but will liaise closely with staff working on the other areas to ensure that advocacy uses and builds on ECRE's litigation work and that it contributes to ECRE's communications work. Tasks will include contribution to ECRE's overall work and organisational activities, such as the Annual General Conference and policy events.

Person Specification

Education/Qualifications

- Degree in law.
- An LLM or additional practical training in asylum law will be an advantage.

Experience

- Junior Legal Officer – one year's experience of legal or advocacy work in a non-profit organisation or comparable policy environment or in legal practice or working for an institution responsible for asylum policies;
- Legal Officer – three years' experience of legal or advocacy work in a non-profit organisation or comparable policy environment or in legal practice or working for an institution responsible for asylum policies;
- Experience of developing and delivering strategies for influencing EU policymakers;
- Experience of drafting and revising legal and advocacy publications, including policy papers and short briefing papers for different audiences;
- Experience of collective advocacy work – work experience in a membership organisation or network is particularly advantageous.

Subject knowledge

- Excellent knowledge of contemporary EU asylum law and its historical development;
- Excellent knowledge of related and intersecting areas of international law, including international human rights law, international humanitarian law and the Law of the Sea.

Skills

- Drafting and oral presentation skills, in particular, the ability to draft in formal legally sound English is essential;
- Ability to work within a complex civil society alliance, including negotiation skills, and the ability to draft and promote compromises;
- Ability to organise own workload and to prioritise based on organisational needs;
- Ability to work with limited administrative support and within the staffing and financial constraints faced by NGOs;

- Fundraising and donor reporting skills;
- Excellent IT skills.

Languages

- Fluent written and spoken English and fluency in at least one other EU or UN language;
- Knowledge of other languages is an advantage, in particular, French, German, Arabic, and Turkish are relevant.

Personal Qualities

- Inter-personal skills and the ability to support and to motivate others;
- Confidence and resilience to criticism;
- Ability to engage in dialogue, to develop and support compromises and to work with those with different views in order to get things done;
- Patience, pragmatism and a constructive problem-solving approach;
- Flexibility and willingness to work outside of office hours occasionally.

Terms and Conditions

Fixed-term contract for 12 months from starting date with the possibility of renewal and transition to a permanent contract (depending on performance and funding).

Depending on the years of experience and expertise, the appointment will be made at Junior Legal Officer or Legal Officer level.

Salary range – Junior Legal Officer: 2300 to 2600 per month brut (paid 13.92 times per year, including holiday pay and bonus), pension and health insurance, transport and meal vouchers (additional benefits of up to EUR 200 per month. Staff begin towards the lower end of the scale.

Salary range – Legal Officer: EUR 2600 to 3200 brut (paid 13.92 times per year, including holiday pay and bonus), pension and health insurance, transport and meal vouchers (additional benefits of up to EUR 200 per month). Staff begin towards the lower end of the scale.

The position is based in Brussels. ECRE's work regime is based on presence in its office; however, staff may work from home up to 2 days per week (with no obligation to do so).

Starting date: January 2025.