

From Proposal to Law? Briefing for Refugee-Led and migrant led Organisations and Advocates on the EU Return Regulation Proposal

Location: online

Date and time: Monday, 24 November 12h00- 13h15

Context:

The European Union and its Member States (MS) continue to pursue a strict and security-focused approach to migration and asylum. This includes constructing fences and surveillance at Europe's external borders, externalising protection responsibilities, funding third countries and authoritarian governments to prevent people from reaching the EU and stepping up the deportation of third-country nationals (TCNs).

On 11 March 2025, the European Commission published a proposal for a Return Regulation to replace the current Return Directive. The proposal, which is currently under negotiation among MS and the European Parliament, seeks to increase returns, giving priority to forced removals over "voluntary departure." Key elements include the creation of "return hubs" outside the EU, longer permissible detention periods, broader grounds for detention, and unrealistic obligations on TCNs to cooperate during the return procedure. Failure to comply could lead to serious consequences, such as financial penalties, restrictions on voluntary departure, extended entry bans, and additional grounds for detention. You can read ECRE's detailed analysis of the Return Proposal [here](#), and a summary of the analysis [here](#).

As MS and political groups in the European Parliament move to negotiate their positions, it is crucial that civil society, including organisations led by refugees and migrants, mobilise and engage in coordinated advocacy. Without such action, these controversial and potentially harmful provisions risk being adopted into EU law, directly affecting the fundamental rights of many TCNs, including rejected asylum seekers.

This online briefing aims to support that effort. It highlights the key concerns raised by the proposal, outlines recommendations for advocacy, provides an overview of the current state of negotiations, and identifies concrete opportunities where refugee-led and migrant-led organisations can make their voices heard and influence the outcome.

12h00	Welcoming and opening remark: Yonous Muhammadi, Founder and Director at the Greek Forum of Refugees
12h05	Update and state of play of the Return proposal • Reshad Jalali, Senior Policy Officer, ECRE • Razan Ismael, Founder and Director, Kudwa.org • Adnan Abdul Ghani, Migration Thematic expert and Project Manager, Save the Children Sweden Moderator: Josephine Liebl, Head of Advocacy, ECRE
12h45	Q&A
13h15	End of the meeting