



Annual General Conference 2026

Thursday 4 June 2026, Brussels

Le Bouche à Oreille, Rue Félix Hap / Félix Hapstraat 11, 1040 Brussels

Workshop Number: 4

Room: TBC

Time: 14.00 – 16.00

Title	Access to people in need of protection in detention
Organiser	European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Examine key challenges related to access to asylum applicants in detention and semi-closed facilities 2. Discuss emerging national practices, concerns and legal avenues to identify risks, safeguards and advocacy priorities for ensuring effective access to rights 3. Foster coordination among ECRE members and others to support rights-based implementation of Pact provisions in the areas of detention and restriction of the freedom of movement
Facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleonora Testi – Senior Legal Officer, ECRE • Jula Zelvenska – Head of Legal Support and Litigation, ECRE
Table Hosts	TBC
Format	<p>Following a brief overview of relevant Pact provisions, implementation developments and litigation opportunities, participants will be divided into three working groups. Each group will discuss the same guiding questions, thus allowing for comparative exchanges across national contexts.</p> <p>The session will conclude with reporting back from the groups and closing reflections.</p>

	<p>Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening remarks and presentation of the workshop (+/-5 minutes) • Overview of relevant Pact provisions etc. (+/-20 minutes) • Group discussions (+/-70 minutes) • Reporting back and Q&A (+/-20 minutes) • Concluding remarks (+/-5 minutes)
<p>Description</p>	<p>Significant concerns are emerging regarding access to asylum applicants in the context of the new rules on screening and asylum procedures following the entry into application of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum on 12 June. The anticipated expansion of the use of detention, including in the contexts of screening and border procedures, as well as the application of the “fiction of non-entry” have raised serious questions about access to legal assistance, independent monitoring and the ability of civil society and international organisations to carry out their work.</p> <p>Building on ongoing exchanges within the ECRE alliance, this workshop will provide a space to assess how these challenges are unfolding across different national contexts and explore possible responses, including advocacy strategies and litigation avenues. It will focus on access to people in detention and semi-closed facilities, the practical availability of legal aid and the implications for fundamental rights.</p> <p>The following questions will guide the group discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is access to asylum applicants in detention or semi-closed facilities currently organised in your national context? What are the main barriers for accessing individuals and providing support? • How is legal aid currently structured in detention-related situations in your national system? What changes are expected under the Pact in relation to access to and provision of legal aid? • What advocacy, coordination or legal avenues could be pursued at national and/or EU levels? What support do organisations need to respond to these challenges?
<p>Contact</p>	<p>For more information about this workshop, please contact Eleonora Testi.</p>