



Annual General Conference 2026

Thursday 4 June 2026, Brussels

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

Workshop Number: 5

Room: TBC

Time: 14.00 – 16.00

Title	Vulnerability under the EU Pact: From legal concept to operational reality
Organiser	European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse how vulnerability is conceptualised and operationalised across the different stages of the asylum procedure under the Pact on Migration and Asylum and how it functions as a trigger for safeguards 2. Examine how vulnerability is expected to function in practice, including within time-constrained and accelerated procedures, in light of operational realities and existing member state practices. 3. Explore how vulnerability may be produced, reinforced or overlooked within the system itself, including through procedural design and reception conditions 4. Assess how the Pact addresses (or fails to address) complex, less visible and intersecting forms of vulnerability 5. Identify key implementation risks and develop recommendations to ensure that vulnerability assessments are continuous, effective and rights-compliant, including through appropriate safeguards, monitoring mechanisms and the contribution of relevant stakeholders
Facilitator	Pia Lindfors – Executive Director, Finnish Refugee Advice Centre
Speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artemis Akbary – Executive Director, Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO) • Adam Mohamed Ariche – Senior Policy and Strategic Alliances Officer, Cepaim Foundation • Karolina Babicka – Senior Legal Advisor, International Commission of Jurists • Dr Luc Leboeuf – Senior Researcher and Adjunct Professor, University of Liège

Format	Panel discussion followed by an interactive Q&A with the audience
Description	<p>The Pact on Migration and Asylum places increased emphasis on the identification of applicants in situations of vulnerability, positioning it as a key mechanism for triggering procedural safeguards and adapted reception conditions. However, given that vulnerability itself remains undefined as a legal concept and the framework relies on overlapping categories such as “applicants in need of special procedural guarantees” and “applicants with special reception needs”, there is potential for a fragmented and inconsistent system.</p> <p>At the same time, the Pact requires early identification of vulnerability across different stages of the procedure while also promoting accelerated processes. This creates structural challenges for the timely and effective identification of vulnerabilities, particularly those that are less visible, context-dependent or emerge over time.</p> <p>Beyond identification, the Pact reflects an implicit shift towards understanding vulnerability as not only inherent but also situational – potentially shaped or exacerbated by procedural design and reception conditions. Moreover, the absence of a clear intersectional approach risks overlooking complex and overlapping forms of vulnerability.</p> <p>This workshop will examine how vulnerability functions across the Pact as both a legal and operational concept, and whether it can effectively serve as a safeguard in practice. It will bring together legal, policy and practical perspectives to identify key implementation risks and develop recommendations for ensuring continuous, effective and rights-compliant vulnerability assessments, as well as to reflect on the role of relevant stakeholders in monitoring and accountability.</p>
Contact	For more information about this workshop, please contact Nilsu Çağla Kaya .