

## OUR IMPACT 2023

ENS has continued to lead civil society efforts to address statelessness in Europe, achieving significant impact and a 'multiplier effect' through our membership, which has grown to over 180 members in 40 European countries.

### *Statelessness Index*

We have further developed our [Statelessness Index](#) which provides a state of play assessment on statelessness in Europe. In March 2023 we held a webinar with over 200 registered participants to mark the publication of the updates to the existing 30 country chapters. Over the remainder of the year, we:

- have worked with our national partners to update 15 countries as well as finalise new country chapters for Georgia and Turkey.
- delivered Index outreach and engagement activities in 14 countries.
- continue to roll out translations of the Index. Currently 23 country chapters are available in their national language.

The Index had over 17,500 users in 2023. It continues to significantly enhance our ability to monitor law and policy, seek reform, and hold governments to account on their international obligations.

### *Stateless Journeys campaign*

We have progressed our [#StatelessJourneys](#) initiative focused on improving routes to protection for stateless refugees. We continue to develop and maintain the dedicated campaign microsite, which hosts various tools including multimedia stories, policy briefings and other resources.

During 2023 we organised a webinar series on asylum registration and screening, children's right to a nationality, determining statelessness in the asylum context, and detention and returns. Almost 1,000 participants registered across the different webinars, demonstrating their demand and relevance. In October, we published new research in a webinar exploring how stateless asylum seekers in the UK experience unique hurdles that pose challenges both for applicants and decision-makers considering their asylum claims.

### *Madrid Conference*

On 8-9 June 2023 we held a major conference '[Addressing Statelessness in Europe](#)' in Madrid, bringing together over 200 participants from 34 countries, including stateless activists, NGOs, lawyers, academics, and representatives from government, UN, and regional institutions.

Keynote speakers included stateless changemakers from Spain, Italy, and the Netherlands, the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, the Chair of the Management Board of the Fundamental Rights Agency, the Council of Europe Special Representative on Refugees and Migration, the Spanish Sub Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, the Chair of the European Parliament's LIBE Committee, and the Executive Director of the EU

Asylum Agency. The public conference was preceded by our Annual General Conference with members, and an Advisory Committee meeting.

We produced a [short video](#) to highlight the conference's impact, as well as a conference outcomes report detailing commitment made by high-level government and institutional representatives present.

### *EU Pact on Migration & Asylum*

Prominent among the commitments made at our Madrid Conference was an undertaking by the Spanish Government to prioritise statelessness during its Presidency of the European Union. This was subsequently fulfilled by the holding of two European Council Asylum Working Party meetings dedicated to statelessness during the Presidency. This also followed a public statement we issued in June ahead of the Spanish Presidency, and several meetings we held with Spain's Permanent Representation in Brussels before and after the conference.

More broadly, we have continued our advocacy to influence the EU Asylum & Migration Pact negotiations, meeting regularly with MEPs as well as the European Commission and representatives from Member State Permanent Representations. In June, we published an updated Pact analysis briefing, including detailed recommendations on further amendments required as part of trilogue negotiations.

During the final quarter of 2023, we continued to engage with representatives of the European Parliament, Council, and Commission to try to secure continuing support for the amendments adopted by the Parliament, and several of these were included in the final instruments which have been put forward for final adoption in 2024.

### *War in Ukraine*

We have continued to monitor and respond to forced displacement caused by the war in Ukraine.

Drawing on our connectivity with our members in the region, we continue to monitor and provide information through 15 detailed country briefings to ensure information gets to those who need it, and to advocate for improved access to protection for stateless refugees, including under the EU Temporary Protection Directive. We continue to maintain a dedicated page on our website to facilitate access to advice and information, and to participate in different stakeholder forums to ensure statelessness is addressed.

### *Human Rights Advocacy*

Throughout 2023 we worked with our members to undertake human rights advocacy, making joint submissions to the Universal Periodic Review for [Germany](#), [Russia](#), [Malta](#), and [North Macedonia](#).

In January, we endorsed a joint submission on the UK led by Just Fair to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Our submission with the Cyprus Refugee Council to the Committee on Civil and Political Rights resulted in a recommendation to Cyprus to review its nationality laws.

### *Strategic litigation*

We have maintained a strong focus on strategic litigation, including to further develop our [Statelessness Case Law Database](#), which contains over 300 summaries. The database attracted almost 8,000 active users in 2023.

We produced a [short video](#) showcasing the impactful contributions of our pro bono legal partners in work to address statelessness in Europe. Over the year, we continued to develop capacity-building tools to support the work of our members and allies in litigating to address statelessness, including publishing a [Legal briefing on statelessness and the prohibition on discrimination against Romani communities](#), and drafting another briefing on statelessness and the right to respect for private and family life, which complement the [Litigation Toolkit on Statelessness](#) which we published in 2022. We also produced three [Litigation Bulletins](#), providing an overview of developments on statelessness from European courts, recent publications and information about upcoming opportunities.

Together with the AIRE Centre, we started regular drop-in sessions for legal practitioners working on statelessness in Europe, providing a member-led space to exchange knowledge and expertise across the ENS network.

### *Roma Statelessness*

We continue to prioritise [work to address Roma statelessness](#). Our focus is on the Western Balkans, supporting our members in four countries (Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, and North Macedonia) to advocate for the implementation of their governments' commitments to end Roma statelessness under the Berlin Process. In April, we made a submission to the European Commission's Annual Enlargement Package.

In October, we attended a [regional conference](#) held by OSCE, the High Commissioner for National Minorities, and UNHCR in Skopje, which saw national authorities and civil society representatives committing to resolving all identified cases of statelessness in South-Eastern Europe and preventing childhood statelessness. During the event our Director, Chris Nash, reflected on the progress made and underscored the ongoing efforts needed to address statelessness in the region.

### *International Advocacy*

We have continued our [international advocacy](#) to ensure that statelessness is prominently addressed as part of the Global Compact on Refugees and Global Refugee Forum (GRF) process, and we have continued to contribute as a member of the Taskforce set up to advise on the formation of a new UNHCR-led Global Alliance to End Statelessness.

In September 2023 we attended and made an advocacy intervention at an Intergovernmental Committee on Migration workshop on statelessness hosted by the US Government in Geneva. In the same month, we also presented at the UNHCR Europe Bureau's NGO consultations and contributed to NGO statements at StanCom and ahead of the Global Refugee Forum (GRF).

For the GRF, we:

- Actively supported preparatory work ahead of the GRF, including submitting four ENS pledges.

- Contributed as a member of the GRF NGO Reference Group, including attending meetings and providing input on related concept notes and guidance tools.
- Attended and advocated at the Global Refugee Forum, including organising a linked statelessness side event co-sponsored by ENS, other NGOs, and UNHCR.
- Intervened at a High-Level side event on statelessness on the GRF programme.

Our community speaker policy was [included as a good practice](#) on the GRF website, and our Madrid conference was highlighted as a positive example of implementation of a civil society GRF pledge.

### *Expert interventions*

We have been invited to provide expert interventions at a range of online and in-person meetings and events organised by different stakeholders, including ICVA/UNHCR on statelessness data, UNHCR Ireland on the launch of their new mapping study, the EU Asylum Agency on country of origin information, European Migration Network on multilevel governance for case resolution, European Court of Human Rights on strategic litigation, and UNHCR and the governments of Romania and Moldova.

### *Our response to the ongoing conflict in Gaza*

In the wake of the eruption in October of ongoing devastating violence in Gaza and Israel, we issued a joint statement with the MENA Statelessness Network (Hawiati) and Statefree calling for an immediate ceasefire, the lifting of the Gaza blockade, and respect for international law to prevent civilian casualties.

Given the multi-generational statelessness lived by millions of Palestinians in the region and beyond, the statement urges that the issue of statelessness cannot be ignored in work to push for a longer-term, just solution for both Israelis and Palestinians and the promotion of sustainable peace and security in the region.

### *Community engagement*

In addition to our regular social media, blog, and newsletter, our [website](#) continues to build our digital presence and increase in issue awareness. The website was visited by over 90,000 users, a 27% increase on 2022. We have strengthened the representation of people affected by statelessness in our network. We continue to facilitate a regular online space for collaboration and dialogue with a group of 35 stateless changemakers and community representatives. We regularly consult the group on core ENS activities and enable opportunities to participate in and inform our work, as well as to co-develop holistic support and training. We have continued to promote our community speaker policy.

In November, we launched a [new film](#), produced together with the Association of Bhutanese Communities in Denmark (ABCD) as part of our #StatelessJourneys campaign. The film offers an intimate look at the daily challenges faced by the resettled stateless Bhutanese community as they advocate for citizenship rights after over a decade of living in Denmark. It illustrates a good example of our community engagement work and its scope for impact, as key stakeholders were brought together at an event in Copenhagen to discuss these issues for the first time.

In order to start to address the complex impacts that statelessness can have on individuals' mental health and wellbeing, in October 2023 we organised a mental health roundtable with 20 key stakeholders to look at ways to increase understanding amongst communities, mental health practitioners, and support organisations on how to adequately promote the care and healing of stateless individuals.

#### *Our vision for 2024-28*

In 2023, we consulted our staff team, Board of Trustees, and membership in developing our new [2024-28 strategic plan](#), which will guide our work over the next five years. Aiming for transformative change, the plan outlines three key goals: that stateless individuals and their communities can claim power as leaders of change, that ENS is an accountable, inclusive, and sustainable network, and that law and policy frameworks ensure the effective realisation of the right to a nationality and other human rights of stateless people.