



## Statement to Slovakia's Presidency of the European Union on Addressing Statelessness in Europe

The [European Network on Statelessness](#) (ENS), a civil society alliance with over 55 member organisations in 39 countries, calls on the incoming Slovakia Presidency of the European Union (EU) to build on current momentum with regard to addressing statelessness in Europe.

In recent years there has been a welcome shift towards greater recognition of the need for more concerted action to combat statelessness at a global, regional and national level – including by the EU. In October 2012, the EU pledged that all those Member States yet to do so (Estonia, Cyprus, Malta and Poland) would accede to the 1954 Statelessness Convention – the international instrument setting out obligations owing to stateless persons on a State Party's territory. On 4 December 2015, the Council of the EU's first [Conclusions on Statelessness](#) were adopted. The Conclusions emphasize the importance of exchange of good practices and information relating to statelessness among Member States.

However, notwithstanding these positive developments and this clear agenda for action, thus far only a handful of European states have put in place functioning statelessness determination procedures in order to implement their obligations in practice. Recent [research](#) reveals that the absence of a route by which stateless migrants can regularise their status leaves these individuals at risk of a range of rights violations, and unable to enjoy their fundamental civil, economic, social and cultural rights owing under international human rights law. Many experience long term destitution and/or immigration detention. Few are in a position to break this cycle, and as a consequence are left in legal limbo for years - posing policy implications for states as well as denying basic rights to those affected. Moreover, Europe continues to be a 'producer' of statelessness. A [report](#) published by ENS last year reveals that even among those states that have acceded to relevant international conventions, more than half are still failing to properly implement their obligations to ensure that stateless children acquire a nationality.

### Recommendations:

When Slovakia assumes the Presidency of the EU on 1 July 2016, ENS encourages it to:

1. Support the effective functioning of the European Migration Network platform for the exchanges of good practices related to the collection of reliable data on stateless persons as well as the statelessness determination procedures among Member States;
2. Work with the European Commission and the European Migration Network (EMN), including by building on the information exchange achieved at and after the [conference](#) hosted by the Luxembourg EMN focal point on 15 April 2016, and help ensure that this translates into an effective and coordinated EU-wide approach through adopting relevant conclusions.
3. Urge Member States in their national practice to ensure that all children born in their territory regardless of their legal status or their parents' identity documents are registered, and ensure that all children acquire nationality where they would otherwise be stateless.
4. Make the accession to the two UN Statelessness Conventions and their implementation by all EU Member States a priority.

# Our Members

## Advisory Committee members

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1. ASKV Refugee Support
2. Asylum Aid, UK
3. The Equal Rights Trust, UK
4. European Roma Rights Centre
5. Forum Réfugiés- Cosi
6. The Halina Nieć Legal Aid Center (HNLAC)
7. HIAS Ukraine
8. Human Rights League, Slovakia
9. Hungarian Helsinki Committee
10. The Immigrant Council of Ireland
11. The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, Netherlands
12. The Latvian Centre for Human Rights
13. Open Society Justice Initiative
14. Praxis, Serbia

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16. Adrian Berry, UK
17. Katja Swider, Netherlands

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19. AIRE Centre, UK
20. Archway Foundation, Romania
21. Association for Integration and Migration, Czech Republic
22. Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration, Italy
23. Asylkoordination. Austria
24. Bail for Immigration Detainees, UK
25. Belgian Refugee Council
26. British Red Cross
27. Caritas Vienna
28. Civic Assistance Committee for Refugees, Russia
29. Civil Rights Programme, Kosovo
30. Coram Children's Legal Centre, UK
31. Danish Refugee Council
32. Detention Action, UK
33. EUDO Citizenship
34. Faith Hope Love, Russia
35. Foundation for Access to Rights Bulgaria (FAR)
36. Future Worlds Center, Cyprus
37. Greek Council for Refugees
38. Refugee Rights Turkey
39. Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, Poland
40. Information Legal Centre, Croatia
41. Innovations and Reforms Centre, Georgia
42. Italian Council for Refugees
43. JRS Romania
44. Kerk in Actie, Netherlands
45. Law Centre of Advocates, Moldova
46. Legal Centre, Montenegro
47. Legal Information Centre on Human Rights, Estonia
48. Legal Clinic for Refugees and Immigrants, Bulgaria
49. Lithuanian Red Cross Society
50. Liverpool University Law Clinic

51. Macedonia Young Lawyers Association
52. Migrant Rights Network, UK
53. NGO Vitality, Moldova
54. Norwegian Refugee Council, Norway
55. The Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS)
56. Peace Institute, Slovenia
57. People for Change Foundation, Malta
58. Portuguese Refugee Council
59. Public Law Project, UK
60. Refugee Action, UK
61. Refugees International
62. Tirana Legal Aid Society (TLAS), Albania
63. Vaša Prava, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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