



EUROPEAN SUMMIT REFUGEES & MIGRANTS



New Voices for an Inclusive Europe Insights from the European Summit of Refugees & Migrants

January 2023



Summit Report

Second European Summit of Refugees and Migrants

New Voices for an Inclusive Europe

17-19 January 2023

Jaffer Latief Najar

Anila Noor

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Background

In the midst of an intensifying global migration "crisis," marked by a multitude of contributing factors including violence, climate change, conflicts, economic downturns, political instability, reduced democratic freedoms, and health inequalities, various pressures persistently drive individuals to search for safety and improved opportunities in distant lands away from their nations of origin. For instance, as highlighted by **UNHCR data from end-2022, global strife and violence have already displaced 108.4 million individuals, with a staggering 62.5 million as internally displaced persons**¹. Furthermore, at the same point in time, 5.4 million had sought asylum, and another 5.2 million were in need of international protection², marking an unprecedented migration concern in modern history.

Recent geopolitical tensions, particularly Russia's military aggression in Ukraine since February 2022, have led to an unprecedented influx of asylum seekers in Europe, reaching levels unseen since World War II³.

The migratory influx to Europe has further been exacerbated over the years. According to European Union statistics, of the 446.7 million inhabitants in the EU, **23.8 million are non-EU citizens**, and **38.0 million were born outside the EU**⁴, constituting **5.3% and 8.5% of the EU's total population**, respectively. The year 2021 alone witnessed the immigration of **2.26 million individuals**⁵ into the European Union. Furthermore, the EU granted refugee status and protection to approximately **384,200 people in 2022**⁶, many of whom have found themselves working in marginalized sectors, thus being situated at the margins of European society.

Within this context, in 2018, organizations in Europe led by refugees and migrants initiated a collective movement to express, discuss, and reflect on the real concerns, problems, challenges, and necessary actions to enhance their participation and address their true needs. These insights were gleaned from their lived experiences in Europe, emphasizing perspectives uniquely informed by the migrants and refugees themselves.

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

² <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/>

³ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en#:~:text=962%2C200%20applications%2C%20including%20881%2C200%20first.than%20in%202019%2C%20before%20COVID

⁴ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en#:~:text=962%2C200%20applications%2C%20including%20881%2C200%20first.than%20in%202019%2C%20before%20COVID

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⁶ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/statistics-migration-europe_en#:~:text=962%2C200%20applications%2C%20including%20881%2C200%20first.than%20in%202019%2C%20before%20COVID

In a historic gathering, on the 4th and 5th of May 2019, refugee and migrant leaders residing in Europe convened for the inaugural European Summit for Refugees and Migrants in Brussels⁷. The summit aimed to unite at least 60 refugee and migrant leaders from all European countries, to strategize and coordinate their efforts, to shape the European agenda and policies as new active EU citizens. Notably, the timing of the European Summit was strategically set to precede the elections of the European Parliament, where topics such as migration and refugee inclusion were heavily featured in the political debates across many member states.

Fast forward to January 2023, in order to bolster these collective efforts and address pressing concerns, the migrant and refugee-led networks and organizations in Europe orchestrated a three-day European Summit of Refugees and Migrants. This was the second summit since the inception of the initiative in 2018. The theme of this year's summit was: New Voices for an Inclusive Europe.

⁷ https://www.globalrefugeenetwork.org/files/ugd/8abc91_8a21d8699c6b43138d1ea90701250733.pdf

'New Voices for an Inclusive Europe'



The 2nd Migrant and Refugee Summit

The Second European Summit of Refugees and Migrants was organized in response to the needs of the migrant and refugee communities, including undocumented and stateless persons. Designed and led by the refugees and migrants themselves, the summit aimed to chart a course toward security, justice, dignity, and fundamental human rights for all refugees and migrants.

The focus of the summit and the concerns of its participants underscored the glaring lack of representation and meaningful participation for refugees and migrants across various sectors, important conversations, and decision and policymaking. It revealed the discriminatory, exclusionary, and even xenophobic nature of existing policies and practices when viewed from the perspective of refugees and migrants. This observation underscored the urgent need to bolster partnerships and refugee-migrant-led networks for advocacy, policy, practices, and broader causes of social, gender, and environmental justice.

The summit unveiled the intricate issues, exclusions, and hurdles confronting refugees and migrants and their support networks. It shed light on the systemic marginalization and exclusion that these individuals often encounter across multiple fronts. However, within this candid exploration, the summit also served as a catalyst for fruitful discussions, nurtured valuable partnerships, and a supportive community. In the midst of these challenges, participants found clarity on shared objectives, rallying around a common mission to address the pressing concerns and reshape the narratives that impact their lives.

With a participatory approach, the summit not only highlighted the challenges that refugees and migrants face but also shed light on how the collective can play a pivotal role in shaping policies, discourses, and institutions at all levels. The dialogue at the summit emphasized the need for multi-level engagement and reform, spanning institutional, structural, societal, gender, policy, and practical/operational realms, both within Europe and beyond.

THE SECOND EUROPEAN SUMMIT CONTRIBUTED TO:

- FINDING REGULAR AND SAFE PATHWAYS
- IDENTIFYING UNDERLYING PROBLEMS
- UNPACKING RECURRENT OBSTACLES
- CREATION OF INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE POLICY AND PRACTICE FRAMEWORK(S) FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS
- SHARING PERSPECTIVES AND CONCERNS THROUGH THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

Summit Key Themes and Focus

As the theme of the second summit - 'New Voices for an Inclusive Europe' - suggests, we mark the time to incorporate fresh perspectives into the creation of inclusive and productive policies and practices for refugees and migrants. Such an approach will safeguard the epistemic, social, political, economic, and gender justice, as well as the dignity and fundamental human rights of millions of refugees, migrants, and the networks led by them, in Europe and beyond.

Inclusion of new voices for inclusive and productive policies, and safeguard the social, political, economic, gender justice, and dignity of migrants and refugees.

In addition to identifying pressing issues, the summit participants also took proactive steps to address and recommend potential solutions to the identified challenges. These solutions were informed by their own lived experiences and demonstrated their commitment to contribute further through their leadership, intellectual, political, financial, and management capacities and skills. The attendees' recommendations were designed with a clear message: **refugees and migrants should be at the forefront, forming partnerships and shaping policies and practices for their own advancement, in collaboration with a diverse array of stakeholders, institutions, and societal actors at European, regional, and local levels.**

The resounding message from the second summit is that sustainable policies and practices are significantly less effective without the inclusion of the voices and leadership of refugees and migrants. It draws attention to the need to reform European policies on refugees and migrants. Such reform should aim to enhance personal and professional capacities, address social and gender justice issues, promote inclusion and rights, and foster decent employment and development opportunities for refugees and migrants. This should be achieved collaboratively and in a participatory manner. This can only be achieved by moving away from tokenistic approaches and towards true and systematized cocreation and codesign of policies and decisions with migrants and refugees as valuable and equal partners.

Refugees and Migrants and their needs need to be at the center of the policies and practices, leading their own prospects, in collaboration with diverse stakeholders, institutions, and societal actors at the European, regional, and local levels.

Organization of the summit

The second European Summit for Refugees and Migrants was spearheaded by the collaborative efforts of three leading refugee and migrant networks, namely:

The Global Refugee Network's European Coalition (EU-COMAR): As the first of its kind, this refugee, migrant, and diaspora-led organization was established in Brussels, Belgium in 2019. Its key mission is to bridge the gap between refugee, migrant, and diaspora communities and European institutions.

New Women Connectors (NWC): This social change movement, led by migrant and refugee women, advocates for feminist ideals. It aims to empower refugees and migrants by connecting them with each other and decision-makers to challenge, reshape, and transform policies and processes that affect them.

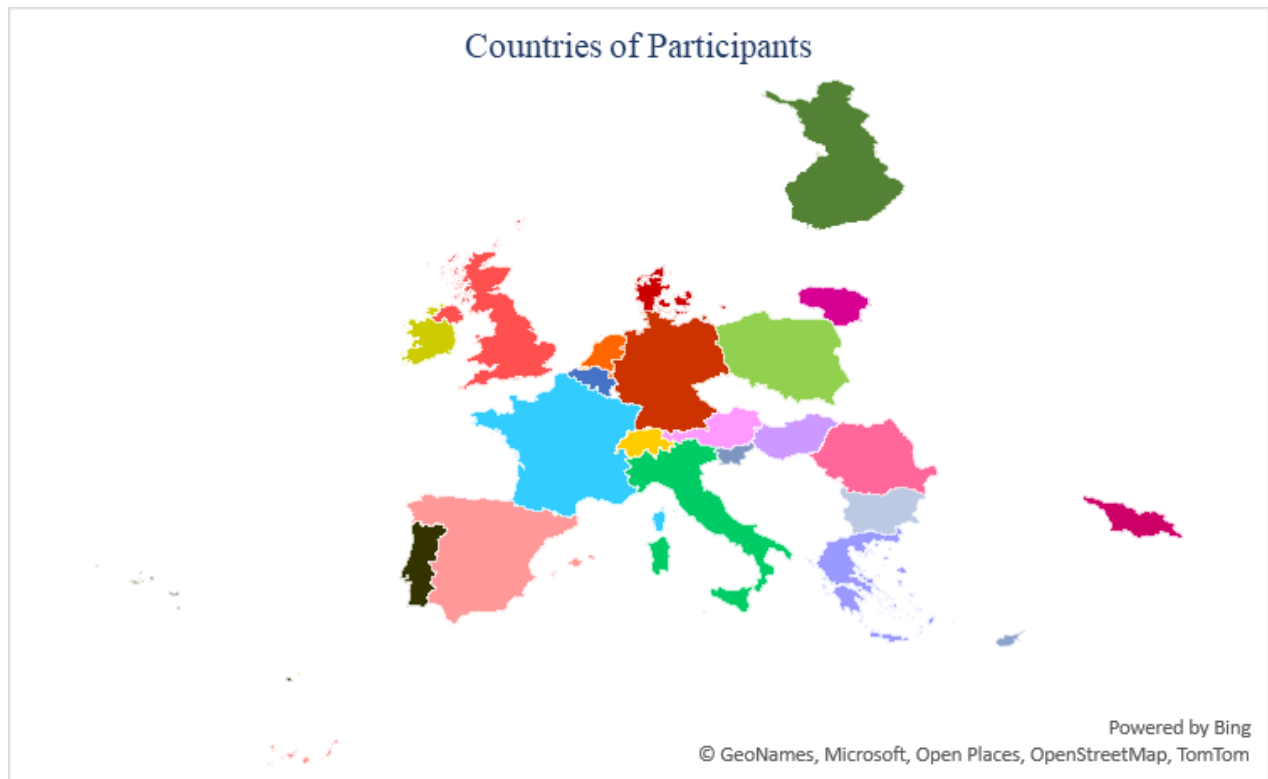
Italian National Union for Refugees and Exiles (UNIRE): As the first national union of refugees in Italy, UNIRE strives to shift harmful narratives around migration by emphasizing the positive impact of refugees in host societies.

In addition to these Migrant and Refugee-led networks, the organization of the summit was also supported by various prominent organizations such as Porticus, Global Refugee Forum, European Stability Initiative, and Bosch Foundation. Notable participants included representatives from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the Canadian government (Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada), KAICIID Dialogue Center, European Programme for Integration and Migration (EPIM), Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM), Action Network, and Place Network.



The summit saw participation from 22 European countries:

Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Bulgaria, the UK, Georgia, Spain, Netherlands, Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Slovenia, Romania, Ireland, France, Italy, Hungary, Denmark, Switzerland, Lithuania, Poland, and Greece.



In total, 141 participants, including stakeholders, attended the summit. Of these, 97 participants were migrant and refugee leaders, including 56 women and 2 transgender leaders.

Methodology

The summit agenda was designed and discussed with migrant and refugee perspectives at the forefront, grounded in a set of key objectives. The primary goal of the European Summit was to bring together migrant-led and refugee-led organizations and change-makers from across Europe. This platform allowed them to share their lived experiences and propose more effective and sustainable solutions for the European Union's migration and refugee policies.

During the summit, participants sought and utilized the opportunity to:

- **Influence** the EU agenda and decision-making on refugee and immigration policies.
- **Design** a roadmap with recommendations to improve EU policies on refugee/immigration for future activities.
- **Create** methodologies to achieve accountability and commitment to inclusive policies from different stakeholders on different levels: from European to regional, to local.

The methodology for the three-day summit was strategically designed to be participatory and reflective, comprising a variety of engaging activities such as panel discussions, workshops, interactive sessions, capacity-building and skill-up training sessions, mutual learning games, and reflection sessions. This diverse set of activities aimed to encourage contributions from all participants, while carefully considering power dynamics to allow all voices to be heard and included in the discussions. This approach aligns with the inclusive and participatory methodologies we advocate for in decision and policy-making spaces.

The summit officially kicked off with a plenary started with a **plenary session focusing on the question of 'What does the success of this Summit look like?'** by three guest speakers:

- Laura von Saint André (Senior Policy Advisor at the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
- Mr. Amer Alkayed (Chairperson, Global Refugee-led Network)
- Mr. Mohammed Ghafour (Protection Officer, UNHCR)

The Plenary set the scene for success and inspired participants to engage fully with the event's agenda. All speakers expressed their keen interest in the summit, and willingness to receive the outcomes with openness to inform their work relating to Migrants and Refugees. They encouraged participants to actively contribute their insights, experiences, and innovative solutions toward the advancement of migrant and refugee policies in Europe. This shared vision of success was framed not merely in terms of policy outcomes, but also in the fostering of a vibrant community of participants committed to long-term change.

This plenary session was followed by a set of Inclusive Participatory Activities such as the 'Human Bingo' game, where participants stepped out of their comfort zones, interacted with individuals outside of their immediate groups, and found the courage to participate, thereby fostering an atmosphere of collaboration.

Action Planning Exercises were a core element of the summit where participants took part in several exercises in a logical order, spanning the duration of 3 days and culminating in road maps for several of the topics and themes we tackled during the summit.

Action Planning Methodology

The summit tackled the top 6 topics selected and mentioned by the participants upon registration, which are:

- Meaningful Political Participation in Decision-Making
- Funding and Financial Resources for Migrant and Refugee Led Orgs
- Employment and Access to Decent Work and Entrepreneurship
- Advocacy and Coalition Building
- Legal Pathways and Safe Access
- Asylum, Reception, and Integration Policies

We approached each of these topics from the perspective of the cross-cutting themes, which are:

- AGD Approach: AGE, GENDER, and DIVERSITY (AGD)
- Racism and Xenophobia
- Decolonization
- Youth
- Narrative

We also reviewed each of the topics and themes on the different levels of advocacy:

- European
- Regional
- Local

Crosscutting themes				
AGD Approach	Racism and Xenophobia	Decolonization	Youth	Narrative

E u r o p e a n	R e g i o n a l	L o c a l	Meaningful Political Participation in Decision Making
			Funding and Financial Resources for Migrant and Refugee Led Orgs
			Employment and Access to Decent Work and Entrepreneurship
			Advocacy and Coalition Building
			Legal Pathways and Safe Access
			Asylum, Reception and Integration Policies

Our methodology comprised a series of carefully planned exercises, designed to facilitate robust discussions, insights gathering, and actionable planning. Each exercise built logically on the last, leading to the creation of comprehensive road maps for various themes and topics.

Knowledge Baseline Establishment:

The summits journey was initiated with an engaging card game that served as an informative session. It was designed to familiarize participants with the topics, cross-cutting themes, and different levels of discussions that would ensue. This game introduced participants to essential concepts and definitions, setting a common knowledge baseline and ensuring everyone had a clear understanding of the terms that would be used throughout the summit.

Problem Tree Exercise:

With a solid foundation established, participants launched the first working session – on the Problem Tree Exercise. Here, participants delved into the root causes and consequences of each major problem pertaining to our topics of focus. This exercise encouraged written contributions, allowing every participant, regardless of their comfort level with public speaking, to express their perspectives and insights.

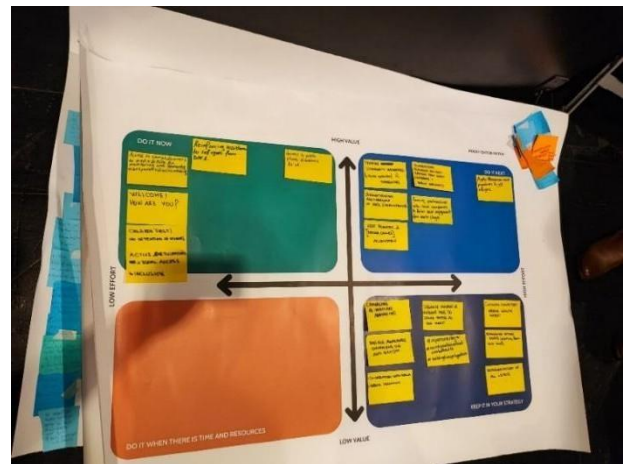


Action Planning:

Building upon previous exercises, participants transitioned into action planning. They were asked to envision potential solutions to the problems identified, focusing on what could be done at the local, regional, and European levels. Participants were prompted to identify stakeholders at each level, including their organizations or themselves, and specify actions each stakeholder could undertake. These actions, along with their corresponding responsibilities, accountabilities, and timelines, were captured on sticky notes.

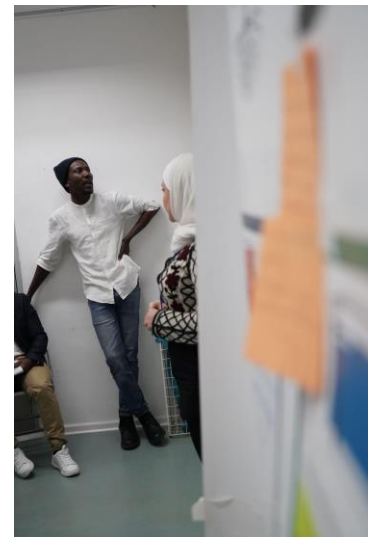
Prioritization and Recommendations:

The final step in our methodology was the use of a Prioritization Matrix. Here, we sifted through the identified actions, determining their relevance and urgency. This matrix, with concrete information about each action, responsible and accountable parties, and a timeline, served as the backbone of the summit's recommendations.



Capacity Building and Training Sessions

Further reinforcing the summit's educational methodology, officials from partner organizations such as GPA & UNITAR, KAICIID, Bridge EU, the EU Asylum Agency (EUAA), and others organized training workshops on a variety of topics. These included climate change, green energy, human rights violations in reception and integration of people with a migrant background, and the EUAA's Consultative Forum. These sessions allowed participants to reflect on, learn about, and discuss significant issues such as climate change, green energy, and human rights violations, and how these impact refugees and migrants. They also discussed ways in which refugees and migrants can contribute to their individual and collective capacities. Such sessions are known to enhance the understanding of participants and broaden their perspectives toward larger social, human, and climate justice(s). Details about the sessions can be found in Annex 1.



Roadmaps and Conclusions

Meaningful Political Participation in Decision-Making

KEY PROBLEMS

Participants expressed a consistent sentiment of being persistently and systemically sidelined from crucial decision-making concerning matters that directly impact them. They articulated the absence of substantial engagement that profoundly shapes their life journeys and individual trajectories. This exclusionary pattern manifests across local, regional, and European level, all marked by a top-down approach. This can be attributed to migrants' and refugees' obstructed access to voting rights, limited political involvement, and mechanisms of participation that often feel tokenistic rather than transformative.

- No access to political participation
- Exclusion from decision-making
- Both affect the work and life of migrants and refugees

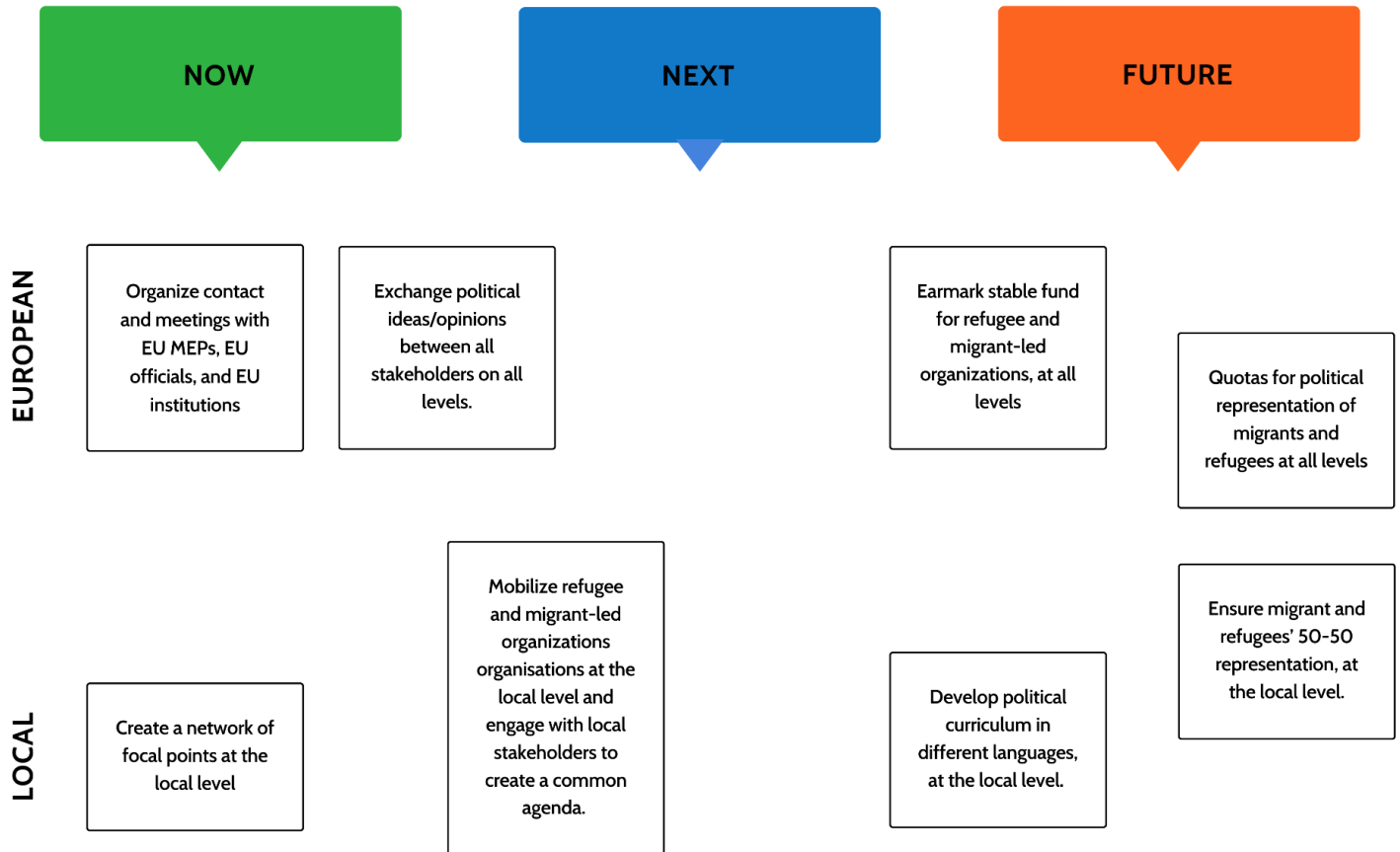
KEY SOLUTIONS

- Increase political engagement of migrants and refugees
- Inclusion of young refugees and migrants in decision-making
- Increase stable and core funding for refugee and migrant-led organizations and grassroots organizations
- Capacity-building of migrants and refugees in terms of political participation
- Reducing tokenistic participation and being involved on equal footing as partners in the decision-making process.

RoadMap:

- Organize contact and meetings with EU MEPs, EU officials, and EU institutions
- Create a network of focal points at the local level
- Exchange political ideas/opinions between all stakeholders on all levels.
- Mobilize refugee and migrant-led organizations at the local level and engage with local stakeholders to create a common agenda.
- Earmark stable fund for refugee and migrant-led organizations, at all levels
- Develop political curriculum in different languages, at the local level.
- Quotas for political representation of migrants and refugees at all levels
- Ensure migrant and refugees' 50-50 representation, at the local level.

MEANINGFUL POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING



Funding and Financial Resources for Migrants and Refugees

Systemic Discrimination

The participants of the summit discussed the major problems, root causes, and consequences of difficulties in accessing funding and financial resources for refugee and migrant-led organizations. They highlighted four main problems: systemic discrimination and prejudice, white saviorism, double discrimination, and intersectional discrimination. They also noted that donors may perceive these organizations as lacking management skills and as being risky or suspicious.

Barriers to funding

The summit participants highlighted barriers to funding access as a key issue. These barriers encompass administrative, language, and knowledge obstacles, along with economic constraints and insufficient recognition of migrants' and refugees' expertise. Moreover, difficulties in opening bank accounts due to documentation issues hinder organizations' funding capacity. Migrant and refugee-led groups also lack awareness of legal frameworks for organizational creation, bank account setup, and tax regulations. The complexity of these systems necessitates seeking legal guidance, which is often inaccessible.

Lack of Information

Participants voiced that migrant and refugee-led organizations face an information gap regarding available funding opportunities. They also highlighted a lack of experts to guide them in identifying relevant funding subjects and honing networking skills, leading to reduced confidence and motivation in seeking deserved funds.

Additionally, it was emphasized that inadequate funding persists, presenting challenges for migrant and refugee-led organizations to meet funding criteria. Some instances revealed a mismatch between funding agency goals and organizational objectives. Consequently, to maintain their vision, organizations might opt not to apply or make adjustments to align with funders' priorities.

Competition

Participants also underlined the problem of competition with well-established organisations, thereby marginalizing the community-based refugee and migrant-led organisations, reflecting unequal opportunities to get grants and continue their activities.

KEY PROBLEMS

- Systemic discrimination at institutional, political, funding, and personal levels
- Barriers to access funding (Administrative, Language, and Knowledge barriers)
- Funding competition with established (non-community led) NGOs

- Lack of information and skills about fundraising
- Lack of transparency about available funding
- Lack of consideration for migrants' and refugees' specific expertise

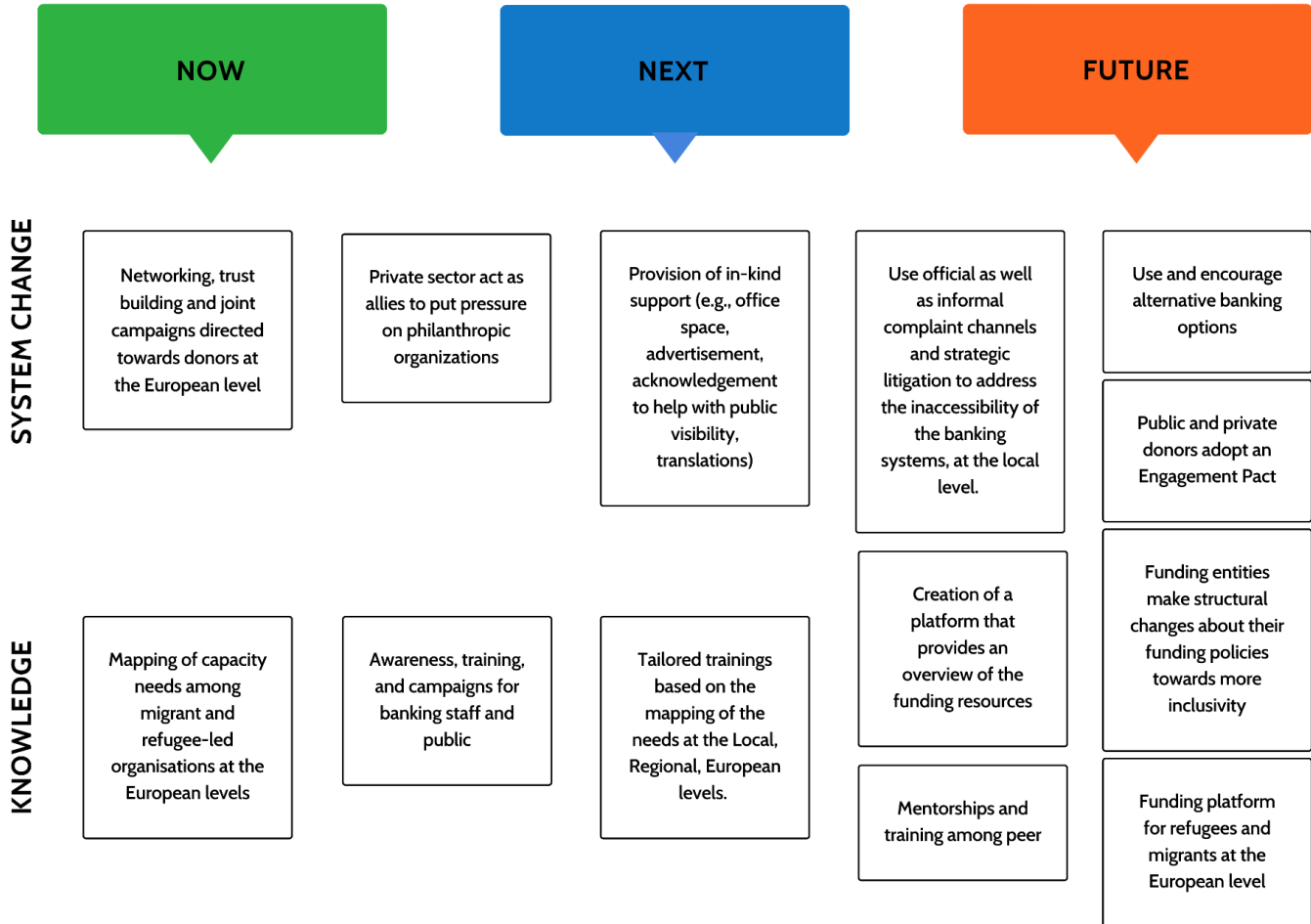
KEY SOLUTIONS

- Banking systems should become more inclusive and alternative systems should be explored
- Migrant and refugee-led organizations and other actors form meaningful partnerships
- Offer more inclusive, intersectional and fit-for-purpose funding programs
- Offer Capacity-building on funding applications and management

ROADMAP

- Mapping of capacity needs among migrant and refugee-led organizations at the European level.
 - Networking, trust building, and joint campaigns directed towards donors at the European level
 - Private sector act as allies to put pressure on philanthropic organizations (e.g., in cases where a company is connected to a private Foundation) to become more inclusive and fit for purpose, at the Local, Regional, European level.
 - Awareness, training, and campaigns for banking staff and public
-
- Provision of in-kind support (e.g., office space, advertisement, acknowledgment to help with public visibility, translations)
 - Mentorships among peers, including information sharing, sharing of contacts and good practices, at the Local, Regional, European levels.
 - Tailored trainings based on the mapping of the needs at the Local, Regional, European levels.
 - Use official as well as informal complaint channels and strategic litigation to address the inaccessibility of the banking systems, at the local level.
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- Use and encourage alternative banking options
 - Funding platform for refugees and migrants at the European level
 - Public and private donors adopt an Engagement Pact, defining principles that are at the core of all partnerships with migrant and refugee-led organizations
 - Funding entities make structural changes about their funding policies towards more inclusivity (e.g., language flexibility, governance, grant selection committee are inclusive of migrants and refugees, intersectional lens to grant-making with more funding going to women-led organizations for instance) at the Local, Regional, European levels.
 - Creation of a platform that provides an overview of the funding resources, the country where it is available, the type of funding and the focus, at the European level.

FUNDING AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES



Employment and Access to Decent Work and Entrepreneurship

Participants identified various categories and components that hinder their access to fair employment, decent work, and the development of skills and entrepreneurial leadership in host countries. These categories encompass challenges stemming from language barriers, bureaucratic hurdles, stigmatization, segmentation, discrimination, racism, and inadequate representation.

According to participants, these elements not only impede employment, work, and entrepreneurship prospects, but also cultivate an unfavorable environment among migrants and refugees. This environment often leads to social exclusion, isolating individuals and fostering passive citizenship.

KEY PROBLEMS

- Social Exclusion and Unequal access to work, different criteria for access in the EU and Member States.
- Bureaucratic Complexity and lack of information/awareness/knowledge
- Stigma of Refugee and Migrant condition
- Racism and lack of engagement of employers with migrants and refugees
- Lack of recognition of skills and qualifications

KEY SOLUTIONS

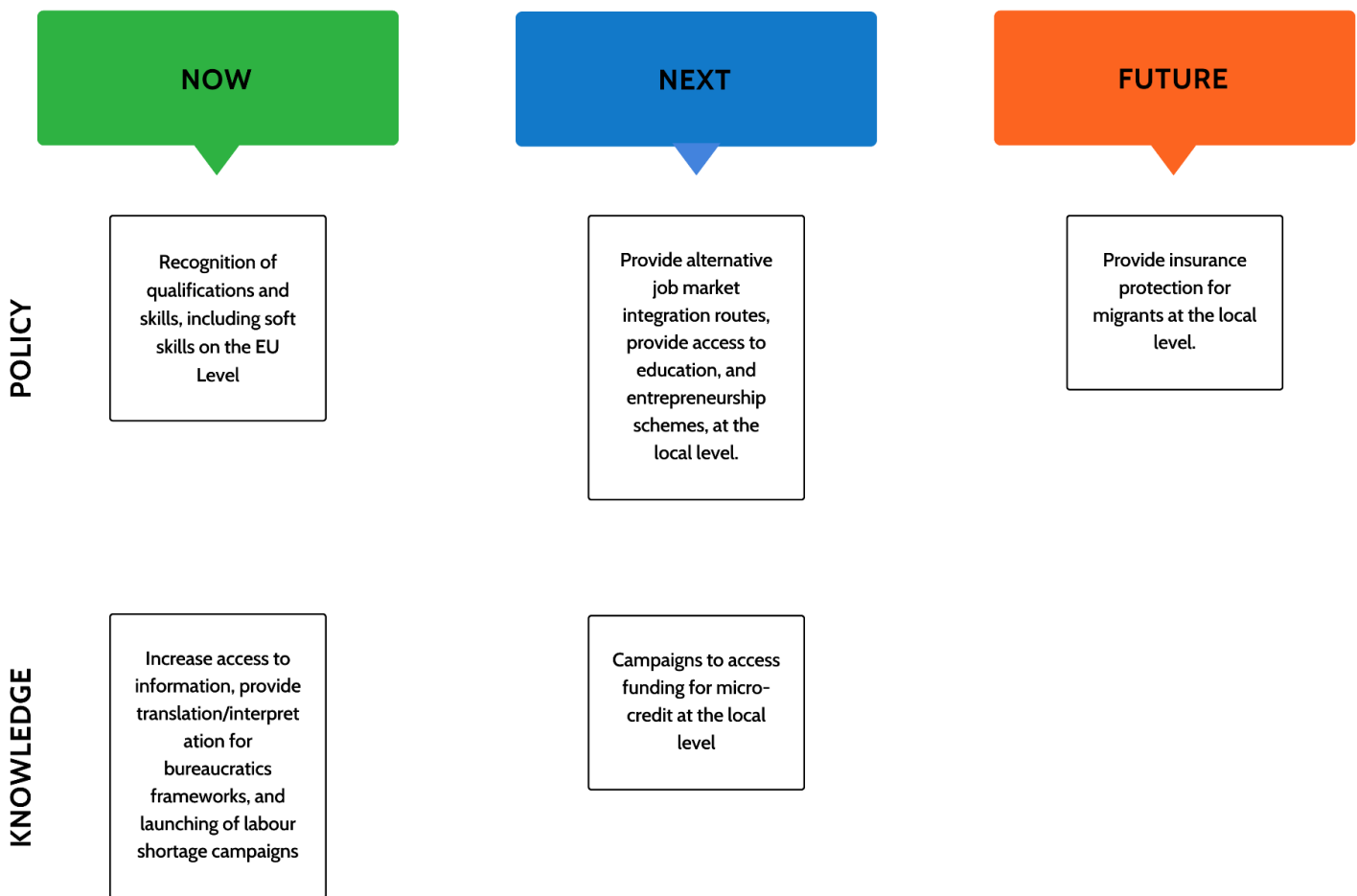
- Allocation of resources for awareness raising and allowing equal access to labor market and decent work
- Creation of a banking institution for migrants at the European level to support entrepreneurship efforts and Facilitation of specialized micro-credit systems for migrants
- Inclusion of migrants themselves in processes in allocating resources for awareness raising and
- Inclusion of migrants in formal and informal labor markets
- Trainings and language learning facilitation
- Special quota arrangement for migrants
- Tax relief for migrants
- Creation of networks of support to help for the decent work and entrepreneurship

ROADMAP

- Increase access to information, provide translation/interpretation for bureaucratic frameworks, and launching of labour shortage campaigns at the local level.
- Recognition of qualifications and skills, including soft skills on the EU Level
- Provide alternative job market integration routes, provide access to education, and entrepreneurship schemes, at the local level.

- Campaigns to access funding for micro-credit at the local level
- Provide insurance protection for migrants at the local level.

EMPLOYMENT AND ACCESS TO DECENT WORK AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



Advocacy and Coalition Building

Summit participants underscored the constraints faced by migrant and refugee-led organizations in terms of collaboration spaces and resources. This limitation often results in either redundant efforts or unhealthy competition among these organizations. Additionally, participants noted a lack of intersectional approach and solidarity among various groups, leading to diminished synergy and collaboration prospects.

Moreover, the impact of proximity to European Union institutions on the advocacy capacity of migrant and refugee-led organizations was emphasized. Geographical closeness tends to impact equal opportunities for effective advocacy, perpetuating power imbalances with European institutions.

KEY PROBLEMS

- Limited collaboration space
- Limited resources to build meaningful partnerships
- Lack of intersectional approach
- Ineffective advocacy and coalition building efforts
- Unequal power relations
- Less solidarity

KEY SOLUTIONS

- Creation and maintaining safe spaces for collaboration and exchange of ideas and knowledge
- Develop sustainable and transparent communication channels on advocacy
- Embed an intersectional approach in advocacy work

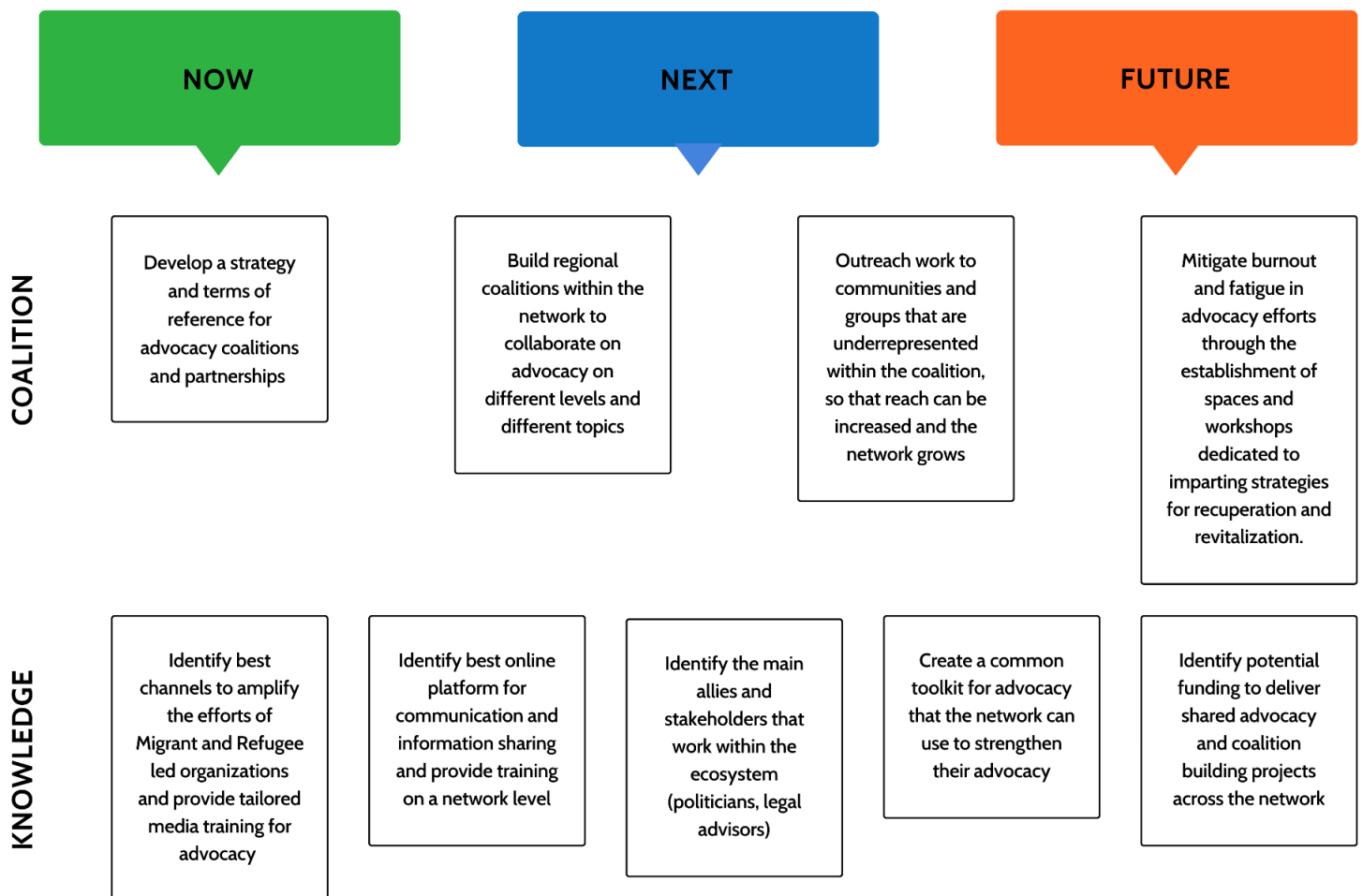
ROADMAP

- Develop a strategy and terms of reference for advocacy coalitions and partnerships
- Identify best channels to amplify the efforts of Migrant and Refugee led organizations and provide tailored media training for advocacy
- Identify best online platform for communication and information sharing and provide training on a network level

- Identify the main allies and stakeholders that work within the ecosystem (politicians, legal advisors)
- Build regional coalitions within the network to collaborate on advocacy on different levels and different topics
- Create a common toolkit for advocacy that the network can use to strengthen their advocacy

- Outreach work to communities and groups that are underrepresented within the coalition, so that reach can be increased and the network grows
- Identify potential funding to deliver shared advocacy and coalition building projects across the network
- Mitigate burnout and fatigue in advocacy efforts through the establishment of spaces and workshops dedicated to imparting strategies for recuperation and revitalization.

ADVOCACY AND COALITION BUILDING



Regular Pathways and Safe Access

Participants discerned a dual-tiered set of challenges impeding secure access to legal pathways for refugees and migrants. These challenges comprise policy-level and structural issues.

On the policy level, participants highlighted the deficiencies in policy responsiveness, emergency measures, and transparency for refugees, stakeholders, and bureaucratic processes. These inadequacies significantly hinder the attainment of regular pathways and secure migration routes.

Furthermore, invisible structural barriers manifest through issues in information dissemination, language barriers, bureaucratic complexities, work and residency permit procedures, travel expenses, and unrealistically low quotas of refugee allocation. These hidden obstacles amplify vulnerabilities, thereby further constricting the avenues for safe and regular access among migrants and refugees.

KEY PROBLEMS

Policy level

- Lack of policy responsiveness, emergency response, and clarity about procedures
- Lack of representation in policy and decision making of migrants and refugees

Structural level

- Interrupted flow and functioning of information
- Bureaucratic complexity
- Artificially low quotas of refugee allocation

KEY SOLUTIONS

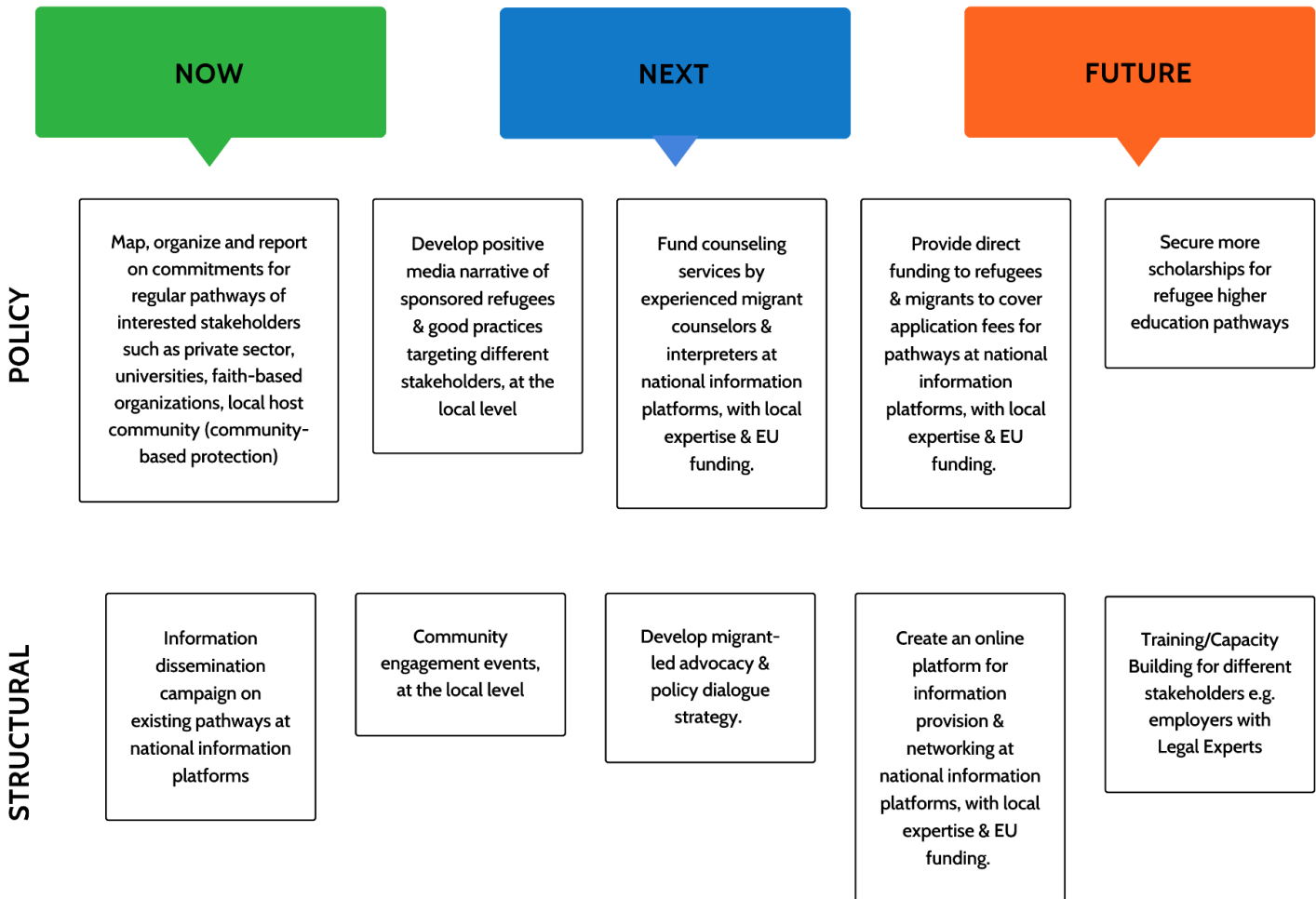
- Build opportunities, trust, easy procedures for documentation
- Combatting discrimination and bureaucratic complications at the reception
- Interventions to safeguard the dignity, respect, justice, safety, and rights of migrants and refugees at all the levels of engagement
- Provide safe and informed access to the regular migration process and procedures
- Increase opportunities for regular pathways such as community sponsorship and family reunification

ROADMAP

- Map, organize and report on commitments for regular pathways of interested stakeholders such as private sector, universities, faith-based organizations, local host community (community-based protection).

- Develop a positive media narrative of sponsored refugees & good practices targeting different stakeholders, at the local level
 - Community engagement events, at the local level.
 - Create an online platform for information provision & networking at national information platforms, with local expertise & EU funding.
 - Develop migrant-led advocacy & policy dialogue strategy.
-
- Secure more scholarships for refugee higher education pathways.
 - Training/Capacity Building for different stakeholders e.g. employers with Legal Experts
 - Fund counseling services by experienced migrant counselors & interpreters at national information platforms, with local expertise & EU funding. Fund counseling services by experienced migrant counselors & interpreters at national information platforms, with local expertise & EU funding.
 - Provide direct funding to refugees & migrants to cover application fees for pathways at national information platforms, with local expertise & EU funding.

REGULAR PATHWAYS AND SAFE ACCESS



Asylum, Reception, and Integration Policies

Three primary categories were featured by participants who explored this theme: (a) access to asylum, (b) asylum processes, and (c) integration and inclusion.

Drawing from their lived experiences, they pointed out that challenges in accessing asylum include the criminalization and detention of seekers, inconsistent conditions across EU nations, limited information and awareness of rights, lack of legal support, instances of pushbacks and Frontex-related issues, and prolonged waiting periods. These challenges significantly compromise the dignity of migrants and refugees who flee their home countries due to marginalization.

Within the asylum process, participants identified inequalities in rights and conditions among asylum seekers in the EU, lengthy waiting periods due to unclear procedures, and restricted access to essential services, healthcare, education, employment, and legal aid. Additionally, the absence of security, particularly for vulnerable groups, and insufficient culturally competent mental health support after migration contribute to their distress.

Furthermore, participants observed that integration efforts typically commence after obtaining a residence permit, leading to a disjointed experience. Factors such as non-recognition of education and credentials, bureaucratic barriers to language acquisition, limited housing, education, healthcare, and work opportunities, as well as a lack of networking within the hosting community, further isolate refugees and migrants. These multifaceted challenges compound the difficulties they face.

KEY PROBLEMS

- Access to Asylum:
 - Criminalization and detention of asylum seekers
 - Inconsistent conditions across EU nations
 - Limited awareness of rights and information
 - Lack of legal support
 - Instances of pushbacks and Frontex-related challenges
 - Prolonged waiting periods

- Asylum Processes:
 - Inequalities in rights and conditions among asylum seekers
 - Unclear procedures leading to extended waiting times
 - Restricted access to essential services
 - Lack of security, especially for vulnerable individuals
 - Insufficient mental health support in post-migration contexts

- Integration and Inclusion:
 - Integration initiation after obtaining a residence permit

- Non-recognition of education and credentials
- Bureaucratic barriers to language acquisition
- Limited access to housing, education, healthcare, and work
- Lack of networking opportunities within the hosting community

KEY SOLUTIONS

Access to Asylum:

- Revisiting Dublin Regulation:
 - Reevaluate and reform the Dublin Regulation to ensure fair distribution of asylum seekers across EU nations.
 - Establish mechanisms to address the uneven conditions among member states in terms of processing and accommodating asylum seekers.

Asylum Processes:

- Humanitarian Reception Approach:
 - Abolish detention centers and replace them with more humane reception processes that prioritize the well-being and dignity of asylum seekers.
 - Implement community-based reception programs that promote integration while awaiting asylum decisions.
- Accountability for Human Rights Violations:
 - Demand accountability for human rights violations by Frontex and other entities involved in reception.
 - Strengthen oversight mechanisms and ensure transparent investigation and resolution of any reported violations.

Integration Challenges:

- Holistic Support Services:
 - Ensure accessible legal support, information, and essential services (healthcare, housing, language learning, education, etc.) from the moment migrants and refugees arrive.
 - Develop comprehensive integration programs that address both immediate needs and long-term prospects for migrants and refugees.
- Early Integration Approach:
 - Shift the integration process to begin immediately upon arrival, not just after obtaining a residence permit.
 - Create policies that support integration efforts for both refugees and migrants without unnecessary separation.

ROADMAP

Local Support and Integration:

- Reinforcing assistance to refugees from day 1 at the local levels.
- Culturally competent mental health support at the local levels.
- Access to public places and services to all at the local levels.
- Train the community navigators (cultural mediation) and translators at the local levels.
- Strengthening partnerships of NGOs and municipalities at the local levels.
- Changing and re-writing narratives at the local levels.
- Demanding voting rights at the local levels.
- Raising awareness, and campaigns on anti-racism at the local levels.
- Organize migrant & refugees organizations to stand united at one front at the local levels.
- Representation at all levels at the local levels.

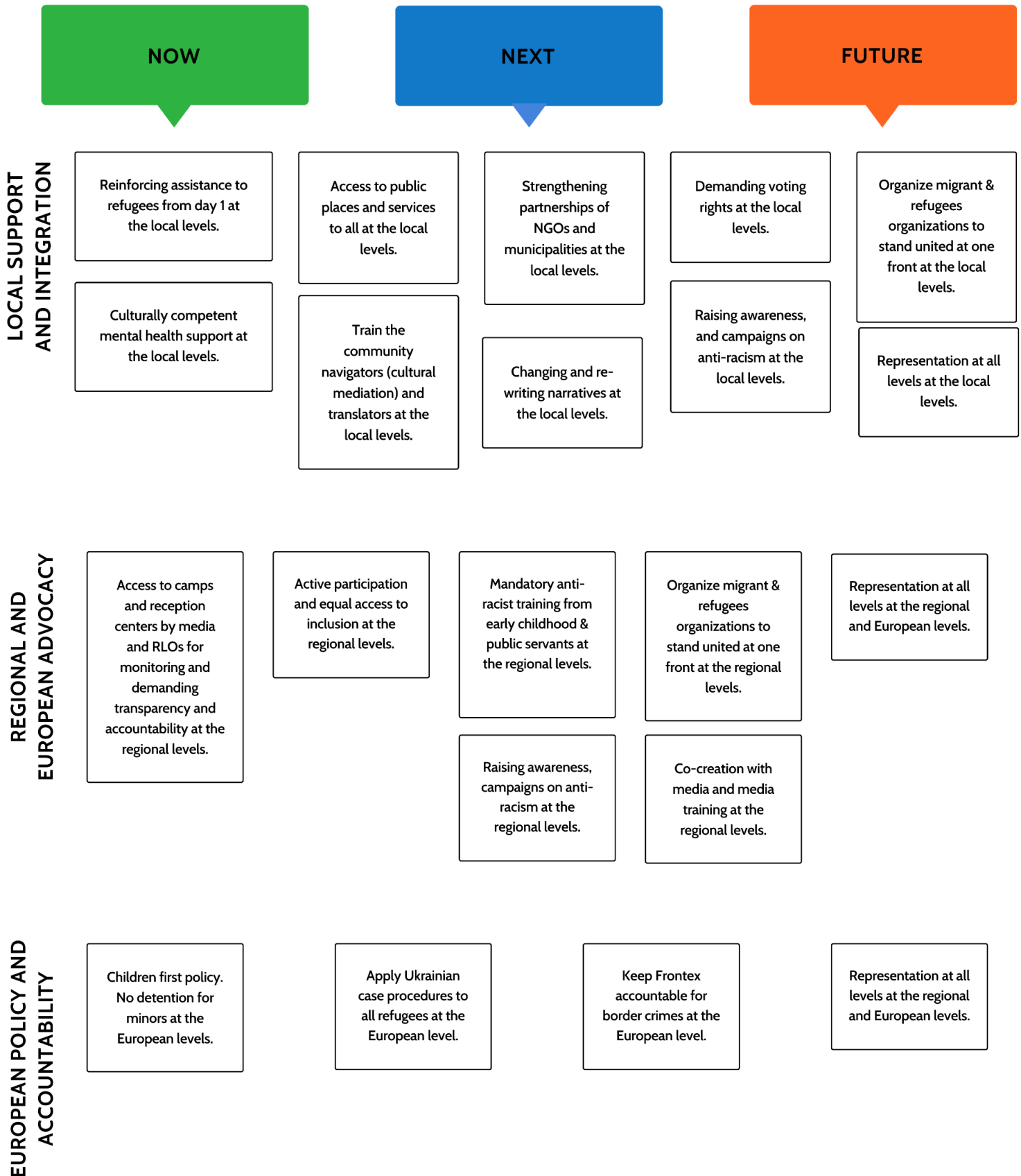
Regional and European Advocacy:

- Access to camps and reception centers by media and RLOs for monitoring and demanding transparency and accountability at the regional levels.
- Active participation and equal access to inclusion at the regional levels.
- Mandatory anti-racist training from early childhood & public servants at the regional levels.
- Raising awareness, campaigns on anti-racism at the regional levels.
- Organize migrant & refugees organizations to stand united at one front at the regional levels.
- Co-creation with media and media training at the regional levels.
- Representation at all levels at the regional and European levels.

European Policy and Accountability:

- Children first policy. No detention for minors at the European levels.
- Apply Ukrainian case procedures to all refugees at the European level.
- Keep Frontex accountable for border crimes at the European level.
- Representation at all levels at the regional and European levels.

ASYLUM, RECEPTION, AND INTEGRATION POLICIES



Key Lessons Learned



In addition to the valuable insights gathered from the participants, it's imperative to underscore the key lessons we've learned from organizing the second edition of the European Summit of Refugee and Migrants. These lessons not only provide us with a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by refugees and migrants but also underscore the significance of continued dialogue and collaboration. As we delved into the meticulous planning and execution of the summit, we gained firsthand experience in fostering inclusive spaces, facilitating productive discussions, and devising actionable strategies. Our journey in organizing the summit has reaffirmed the importance of creating platforms that amplify diverse voices, encourage partnerships, and promote tangible policy and structural changes. These lessons, interwoven with the participants' insights, strengthen our commitment to advancing the rights and well-being of refugees and migrants across Europe.

- **Amplifying Voices for Inclusive Policies:** Recognizing that the lived experiences and voices of refugees and migrants are indispensable for creating policies and practices that are sustainable, inclusive, and aligned with their needs and aspirations.
- **Representation Gaps Across Levels:** The summit underscored the striking absence or limited representation of refugees and migrants in decision-making processes at various levels, necessitating proactive efforts to ensure their meaningful participation.
- **Challenges of Current Policies:** Through the lens of refugees and migrants, the current policies and practices within Europe were highlighted as exclusionary, discriminatory, and often counterproductive, emphasizing the urgency for systemic change.
- **Multilevel Marginalization:** The summit revealed the pervasive marginalization of refugees and migrants across a multitude of levels - political, financial, employment, advocacy, coalition-building, and asylum processes, urging a comprehensive approach to address these disparities.
- **Strengthening Refugee and Migrant Networks:** The importance of networking, collaboration, and coalition-building among refugee and migrant-led organizations was firmly emphasized, recognizing their collective impact on advocating for change.
- **Strategic Collaborations:** Participants sought partnerships with institutional and political stakeholders across the board, a lesson indicating the significance of collaboration with decision-makers to drive meaningful change.
- **Empowerment through Training:** The summit highlighted the need for training and capacity-building workshops as a means to empower refugees and migrants, enabling them to effectively engage in advocacy and policy shaping.

- **Tailored Financial Support:** The consensus emerged for specialized assistance and funding programs tailored to refugee and migrant-led organizations, acknowledging their pivotal role in promoting social change.
- **Prioritizing Mental Health:** Recognizing the mental health challenges faced by refugees and migrants, the summit participants highlighted the need for dedicated support and programs to address their psychological well-being.
- **Strengthening Research Collaborations:** The summit proved the importance of research collaborations, particularly with refugee and migrant organizations, to comprehensively study issues spanning social, educational, political, economic, cultural, health, and communication domains.
- **Inclusive Integration Policies:** The summit shed light on the urgency of more inclusive and easily accessible integration policies, without any discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, race, or sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGIE).

Note of Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved in successfully facilitating the European Summit sessions and report. Your dedication and teamwork made this event a resounding success.

Special thanks to Razan Ismail from New Women Connectors for designing the methodology of the summit, Shaza Alrihawi, GRN's co-founder for co-organizing, Syed Hasnain from UNIRE for his support, Maysa Ismael and Nyima Jadama for facilitating the logistical means to attend the summit and providing unwavering support.

We are grateful to our donors and partners UNHCR, Porticus, BMW Foundation, Bosch Foundation, Kaiciid Dialogue Center, Network for Dialogue, European Programme for Integration and Migration, European Anti-poverty Network, Action Network on Forced Displacement, Women as Agents of Change, Kudwa, Seek Feminist Research Network, The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), Global Platform for Action, European Union Agency for Asylum, Mob Lab and Revibra Europe.

And lastly, huge appreciation to the refugee leaders and migrants who attended the summit and provided their inputs, experience and expertise. Thank you for your hard work and commitment.

Capacity Building - Skill Up Training - four Parallel Sessions

- **GPA & UNITAR: Sustainable Energy**

In the context of the Annual Meeting (Summit) of the European Coalition of Migrants and Refugees (EU-COMAR), the European Chapter of the Global Refugee-Led Network (GRN), the Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings (GPA) led an awareness-raising (sensitisation) session on access to energy in displacement settings (also known as humanitarian energy). The main objective of the session was to introduce participants to the basics of humanitarian energy, including its relationship to the question of inclusivity.

The session targeted mainly leaders of Refugee-Led organizations (RLOs) and other stakeholders with limited background in humanitarian energy. The engagement is part of the GPA's long-term objective of shaping the debate on the achievement of Goal 7 of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy to all, including to those in displacement situations. It is also part of the GPA's commitment to enable learning and sharing knowledge about humanitarian energy, including in the context of an on-going collaboration between the GPA and the GRN on similar matters. The awareness-raising session was led by Thomas Fohgrub, Strategic Lead of the GPA.

- **KAICIID/Network for Dialogue: Dialogue for Policy**

Many refugees and migrants continue to struggle with problems of exclusion, racism and discrimination despite having lived in a host country for many years and sometimes even after obtaining citizenship. Such problems cast doubt on how well social inclusion processes are working, particularly those that enable refugees and migrants to actively participate in social processes. In this session dedicated to different aspects of social participation, KAICIID Network for Dialogue presented and created space for dialogue in the interactive session on how to best address the challenges related to the active engagement of refugees and migrants in public policy and how interreligious and intercultural dialogue can support that process. The importance of migrants' public policy participation is underlined in a number of European legal instruments. This session explored how policymakers, faith-based organizations and religious congregations and leaders can help improve the essential engagement of migrant- and refugee-led organizations in public policymaking processes in Europe. Supporting the active participation of refugees and migrants in consultative and decision-making processes can help ensure that integration and inclusion policies are more effective and reflect real needs. In this session participants focused on one of the Network for Dialogue policy briefs to explore the questions:

What recommendations are particularly relevant and have the greatest potential to succeed?

What would the role of religious leaders and faith-based groups be in implementing them?

How can interreligious and intercultural dialogue help in that process?

- **Bridge EU: Human Rights Violations in reception and integration of people with a migrant background**

The objectives of the session were twofold:

1. To identify human rights violations in reception and integration policies
2. To provide legal and policy tools responding to human rights violations (e.g. complaints, litigation, infringements, advocacy, etc)

In this interactive session, participants were invited to share their personal or organisational experiences in human rights violations cases and approaches to address them. Organisers of the session provided a short overview of the relevant EU legal and policy instruments, examples and cases of human rights violations and the corresponding responses. Participants also benefited from some practical insights into certain legal and policy tools. Due to the interest in this session, a joint EUC-Bridge EU online training was organised in April 2023 to help attendees identify the necessary tools to respond to human rights violation cases.

- **EUAA: EUAA's Consultative Forum**

The European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) offered a presentation on the Agency's key areas of work, as a European centre of expertise on asylum, including asylum knowledge, training and professional development and operational and technical assistance. Special reference will be made to the EUAA Consultative Forum, which is the Agency's main channel of dialogue and cooperation with civil society. The presentation highlighted key analytical outputs that may be of particular relevance to civil society organizations, including the annual Asylum Report series, where civil society organizations, research and academic institutions can provide their input.

Feedback & Comments

*Impressive mobilisation
and organization*



*Very well organised,
representative and
inclusive*



*Thinking and looking at
problems from all
perspectives*



*New knowledge and
insights on emerging
issues on migration and
refugees.*



*Very interesting and
great ideas came from
it*



*Fantastic organisation
and momentum, thank
you!*

