

Confronting Racism in Europe's Migration Policies: Key Questions for EP Candidates

The [EU Anti-Racism Action Plan](#) (EU ARAP) acknowledges structural and institutional racism and calls for the mainstreaming of racial equality in all EU policies. ARAP also recognises the intersectional impact of racism and the specific vulnerability of migrants and refugees by drawing attention to the risk of rising xenophobia and racism towards this group. Although the new [Equality Task Force](#) has been set up to ensure mainstreaming of equality across all policy areas, the modalities and impact of its work have been questionable, considering the adoption of policies like the [Migration Pact](#) which do not ensure equal treatment for migrants. This political agreement in its current form is quite alarming and has been criticized by human rights groups and [civil society organisations](#) including ENAR, as putting an [end to asylum](#) and [racializing migration](#) to Europe.

Across the European Union, the response to migration has mostly come in the form of externalisation and the reinforcement of external and internal borders. As a matter of fact, [10 of the 28 Schengen Member States have currently reintroduced internal border checks](#) with 9 of them citing migration as one of, if not the only, reasons for doing so. The reform of the [Schengen Borders Code](#) which expands the migration-related reasons for which checks can be reintroduced at internal borders and the recently proposed [Facilitators Package](#) which frames migration as an issue of criminality and penalises those acting in solidarity with them, are symptomatic of Europe's securitization of migration as a threat to Member States.

However, when compared to the dignified and unified response from EU member states to the displacement of Ukrainian refugees with the activation of the Temporary Protection Directive, the current response to migration from the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin and South America, the double standard is not only noticeable, but also reflects far-right ideologies gaining traction across the continent.

In the context of the upcoming EU parliamentary elections, it is imperative to problematize racism in Europe and its intersection with migration policies, and crucial to challenge candidates and policymakers on their commitment to combating racism and upholding human rights for all individuals, regardless of their racial background or nationality.

Structure of the Panel:

- The moderator introduces the topic and the panel
- Each panelist has 5 mins to provide an intervention responding to the first general question.
- Each panelist has 5 mins to respond to the second specific question.
 - The space is open to CSOs to ask questions to the panelists

General question for all panelists:



1. Reflecting on this EU mandate, we see a complete disconnect between intentions to promote racial equality, and the various EU migration legislation, which will in most regards perpetuate discrimination, criminalization and violence against migrants in Europe (for example Migration Pact, Schengen Borders Code, Facilitators Package). By way of an introduction, can you reflect on this, highlight any major problematics you have seen and explain your position so far?

Specific Questions for Panelists:

1. MEP Cornelia Ernst:
 - Reflecting on your time as an MEP, what aspects of addressing racism and challenging migration policies do you believe could have been approached differently or improved upon? Which approaches would you have hoped to see from EU institutions to migration, and what should we be building towards?
2. MEP Saskia Bricmont:
 - As a current member of the European Parliament who is rerunning for elections, and who during this last mandate, worked on the migration files, how do you plan to ensure that EU migration policies uphold principles of human rights and dignity for all individuals, regardless of their origin or group, particularly in the context of rising xenophobia and far-right ideologies across the continent?
3. Ahmad Reshad Jalali:
4. ECRE has been doing a lot of work recently encouraging EU citizens to vote en masse during the upcoming EU elections. Migration as always remains one of the hot topics. How is your organization ECRE framing its response to migration in the context of upcoming EU elections and how useful is this approach for policy makers as well as voters?
5. Emmanuel Achiri:
 - In what ways can civil society organizations enhance their efforts to raise awareness about the intersectional impacts of racism and migration policies, particularly among marginalized communities, and how do you perceive their role in advocating for systemic changes to address these issues on both national and European levels?

Moderator: Sarah Chander (Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice)

Speakers:

- MEP Saskia Bricmont
 - MEP Cornelia Ernst
 - Ahmad Reshad Jalali, ECRE senior policy officer TBC
 - Emmanuel Achiri, ENAR policy and advocacy officer
- Q and A with CSOs (60 minutes)