



SOLVING STATELESSNESS IN EUROPE

Our strategic plan 2019–23



European
Network on
Statelessness

“ After 20 years of living without nationality, my life changed a lot [since I was granted permanent residence as a stateless person], everything changed. I started to work just like normal people. I have some money, I can buy things for my kids, finally I don't need to hide anywhere....

NATALIA, STATELESS WOMAN LIVING IN SLOVAKIA

FOREWORD



We are very proud of our progress over the five years since founding our Network. We have transformed from an idea to a dynamic organisation with a dedicated staff team of five and a committed membership spanning 40 European countries.

An external evaluation of our work during this period confirmed that we have mobilised key actors around the issue of statelessness and quickly established ourselves as a respected and credible voice. We have filled a critical gap, galvanising civil society action on an issue that was previously hidden and ignored.

But our ethos is to be innovative, ambitious and to continually strive for improvement in what we do and the impact we achieve. Our new strategic plan recognises that we need to enhance how we work with people affected by statelessness to inform and deliver our mission, and to strengthen and diversify the voices speaking out on statelessness. We also need to build our partnerships with organisations working on the issues affecting stateless people's lives, including child rights, gender, access to justice, forced displacement and anti-discrimination.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the potential to develop our Statelessness Index as a catalyst for reform, encouraging states to enact law and policy that not only meets international standards, but reflects best practice. Ultimately, we want to see a Europe where all stateless people access their rights and all states have legal frameworks in place to protect stateless people and prevent new cases of statelessness arising.

This will not be easy against a political backdrop characterised by rising anti-migrant sentiment, securitisation and enforcement. But building on our strong foundations and propelled by the passion and drive of our members and supporters, we are confident that we can continue to make a real difference to the lives of men, women and children living without a nationality in countries across Europe.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Nash".

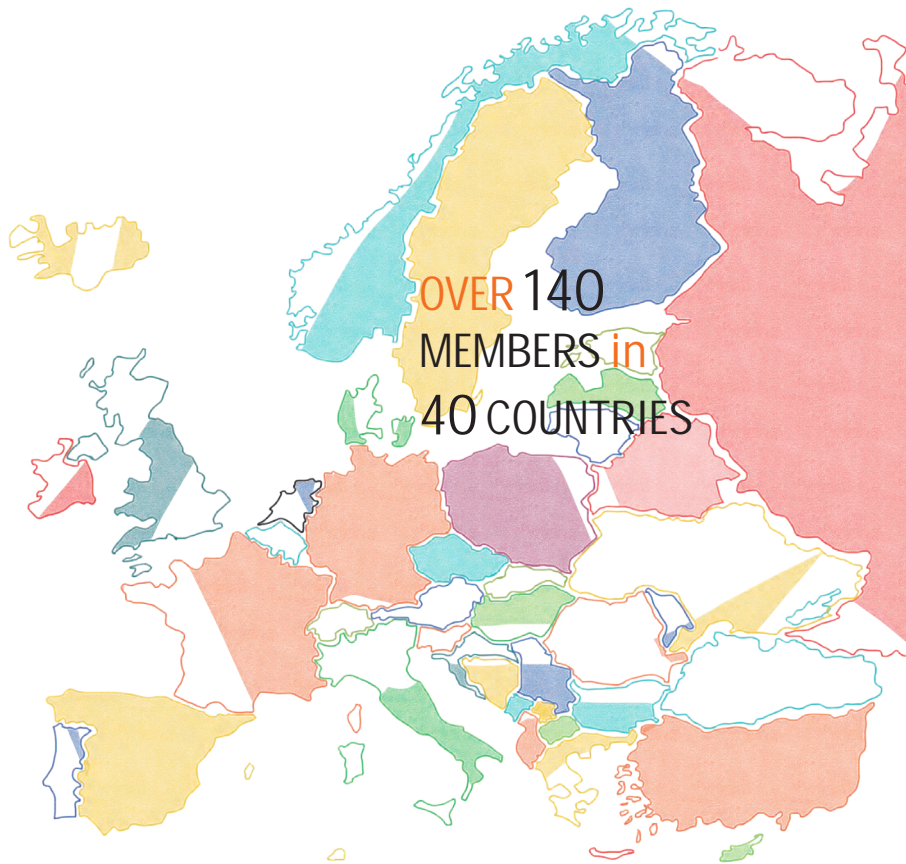
Chris Nash, Director

WHO WE ARE

We are a civil society alliance of organisations and individual experts committed to tackling statelessness in Europe. We currently have over 140 members in 40 countries and are the only pan-European network dedicated to working on statelessness in Europe.

The European Network on Statelessness (ENS) was founded as a coordinating body and expert resource for organisations working to promote the right to a nationality. At the heart of our strategy is an understanding of the need to mainstream and raise awareness about statelessness and nationality rights, build civil society's capacity to act, and be an effective catalyst for change.

Our small but dedicated London-based Secretariat coordinates the activities of our growing and diverse membership across Europe ranging from large international NGOs to grassroots and community organisations, legal advice agencies, research and policy thinktanks, and prominent international law experts. Our work and strategic direction are guided by an Advisory Committee and our experienced and committed Board of Trustees.



OUR VISION, MISSION and VALUES

Our strategic plan sets out the ambitious next stage of our development. We want to be the organisation that works tirelessly alongside people affected by statelessness to improve their lives; a strategic partner to policymakers in law and policy reform; a network that is stronger with the voice of each new member who joins our campaigns; and a catalyst for change.

Our Vision

Our vision is for a Europe where everyone's right to a nationality is respected.

Our Mission

Everyone has the right to a nationality. We believe this must be respected and that the human rights of people who lack a nationality – stateless people – must be protected. We are dedicated to working with stateless people in Europe to advocate for their rights. We aim to reach our goals through law and policy development, awareness-raising, and capacity-building.

Our Values

- Respect for universal human rights
- Transparency
- Innovation
- Equality
- Partnership



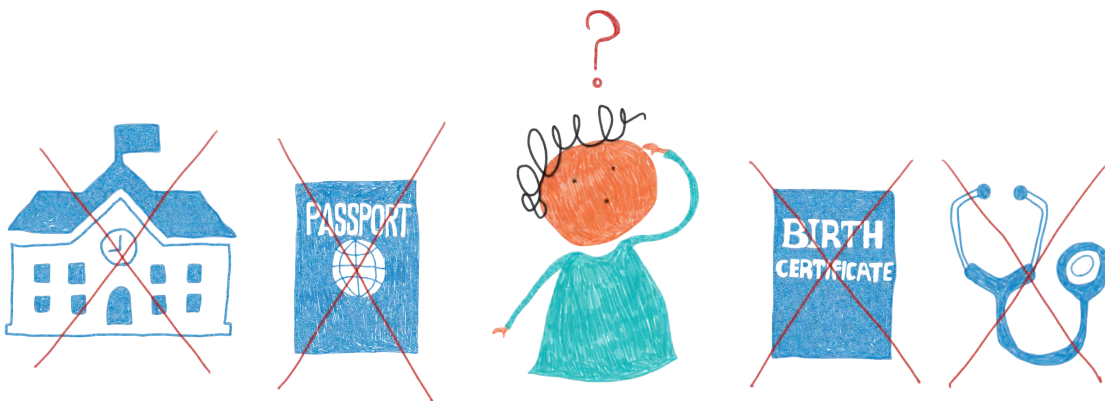
WHY OUR WORK IS IMPORTANT

Statelessness is a legal anomaly affecting more than half a million women, men and children in Europe. People whose families have lived in the same place for generations can be stateless, as well as recent migrants and refugees.

Stateless people are often marginalised, at risk of discrimination and human rights abuses. They are denied basic rights many of us take for granted: to go to school, to work, to marry, to register the birth of a child, to 'legally exist'.

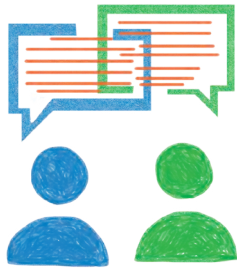
Statelessness occurs for different reasons including discrimination, state succession, conflicts in law, and deliberate policies of deprivation or denial of nationality. All European States have international obligations to protect stateless people and prevent statelessness, but this rarely translates into effective legal protection at national level. If Europe is to uphold its traditions of freedom, democracy, equality, rule of law and respect for human rights, it must recognise and address statelessness.

The current political landscape in Europe presents challenges, but also important opportunities. Against the backdrop of UNHCR's #IBELONG campaign, seeking to eradicate statelessness by 2024, our work so far has generated more visibility among decision-makers, better evidence, strengthened relationships, larger potential audiences, and connections to stateless communities. We are now in a unique position to push for change.



HOW WE STRUCTURE OUR WORK

Our work is structured under three core pillars:



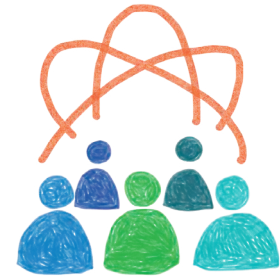
Awareness-raising & Knowledge-sharing

Statelessness remains relatively poorly understood. We raise awareness of the issues and work with people affected to amplify their voices. Our weekly blog and quarterly newsletter provide updates and commentary to a readership of thousands. Our cutting-edge research and policy analysis inform debate. Our website and Statelessness Index are tools for advocacy and first ports of call for information and research. Our online campaigns engage and inspire supporters and new audiences.



Law & Policy Development

We strive for the rights of stateless people through evidence-based advocacy. We commission and publish research to strengthen understanding of the problem and come up with solutions. We work with our members to produce expert policy analysis on statelessness across Europe. We are an interlocutor between our members and regional decision-makers. Our meetings and conferences attract international audiences. We support our members to litigate on statelessness and advance change.



Networking & Capacity-building

Our diverse network of 140 organisations and individuals in 40 countries gives us a multiplier effect. We coordinate our members' involvement in pan-European campaigns, research and advocacy. Our Annual General Conference brings our members together to debate and strategize. We provide a forum for the exchange of information, ideas and good practice. Our Europe-wide training programme and specialist pool of trainers build the capacity of civil society, policymakers and frontline officials to address statelessness.

HOW WE WORK ACROSS THEMES

Statelessness is an intersectional issue. Stateless people are of different genders, ages, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds, abilities, religions and ethnicities. Some stateless people are on the move, and others have lived in the same place for generations. We recognise that our work must take account of this nexus, and the views and voices of diverse stateless communities, for it to be relevant and legitimate. Guided by these principles and the expertise of our Advisory Committee and membership, we identify priority issues to address and focus on within four broad priority themes:

Children's Rights

Including access to birth registration and promoting nationality law reform to end childhood statelessness.

Access to Justice

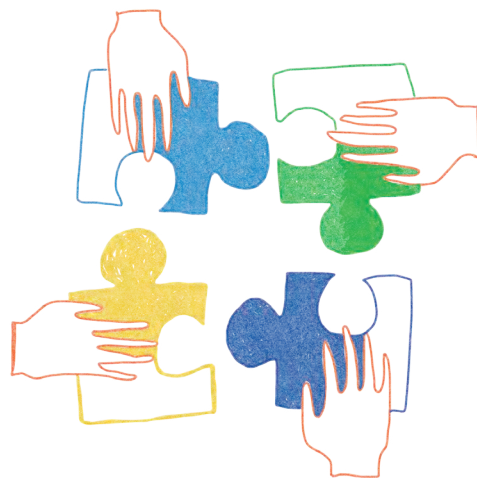
Including promoting legal empowerment, rule of law, and ending the detention of stateless people.

Forced Displacement

Including responding to stateless refugees, advocating for statelessness protection regimes, and improved integration policies.

Anti-Discrimination

Including minority rights, health rights, addressing Roma statelessness, and gender discrimination.



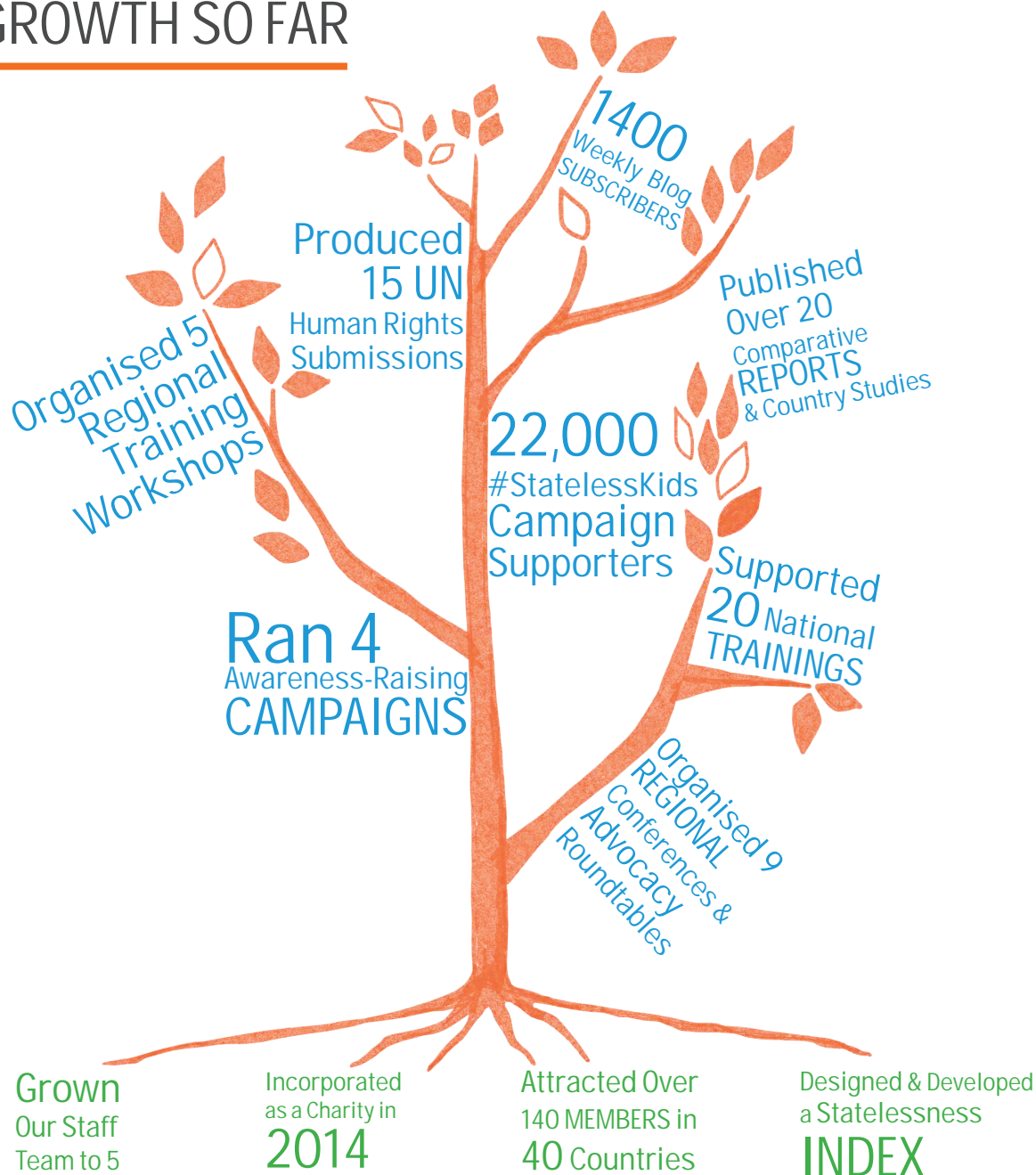
HOW WE WORK WITH OTHERS

Partnership is one of our core values. We strive to work in partnership with people affected by statelessness, engaging with representatives to inform our work and amplify the diverse voices of stateless people in Europe.

We seek to partner with civil society organisations and experts focused on issues that intersect with statelessness, including, among others, child rights and women's rights experts, refugee support organisations and advocates, and minority rights specialists.

We have also developed strong relationships for advocacy with regional and international institutions including the European Union, Council of Europe, UNHCR and UN human rights bodies, as well as with national governments, ombudspersons and National Human Rights Institutions at country level.

OUR GROWTH SO FAR



OUR FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

Under our first strategic plan, we realised many of the objectives we embarked on in 2014.

An external evaluation in Summer 2018 confirmed that our work to date has resulted in significant awareness-raising and mobilisation gains over the first five years of our development. This new strategic plan outlines how we intend to move forward in the next stage of our journey, to capitalise on the strength of our membership and our authoritative voice on statelessness and translate this into tangible change for stateless people in Europe.

The plan is informed by extensive consultation with staff, trustees and members, as well as the evaluation, which sought the views of members and external stakeholders on our work over the last five years. It is intended for internal and external audiences alike, setting out our strategic goals and objectives for the next five years at a glance, and will form the basis for our internal operational plan. We will report on the objectives to trustees, members and donors as part of our ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1

Mobilise support to challenge statelessness by sharing knowledge and expertise

We must motivate and mobilise new supporters to act in a way that results in positive change for stateless people.

We will grow awareness of statelessness by sharing evidence, knowledge, and experiences with diverse audiences.



We will achieve this by focusing on:

- Promoting effective policy solutions to protect stateless people and prevent new cases of statelessness arising
- Communicating the rights and experiences of stateless people by championing what matters most to them
- Enhancing access to information for diverse audiences and engaging mainstream media through proactive and reactive communications
- Feeding expert commentary and analysis into key debates and policy agendas
- Designing and delivering public campaigns, advocacy and capacity-building activities for different audiences

We will know we have made progress because:

By the end of 2023, ENS will be recognised as the 'go-to' organisation for comment and analysis on statelessness. Our expertise will be sought out by decision-makers and people affected by statelessness will help us shape and communicate messages.

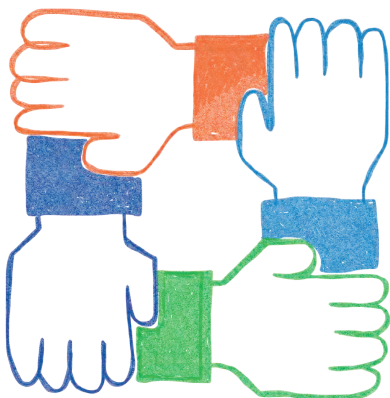
We will have a robust evidence base from which to inform and influence decision-makers, and statelessness will be more accurately addressed and mainstreamed across relevant policy areas such as minority rights, child rights, gender equality, migration and asylum.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

Strengthen collaboration and achieve change through a pan-European network

We must maintain an effective and sustainable membership that is informed, engaged, and resourced to work on statelessness.

Our joint campaigning and advocacy will be designed to reflect the priorities and capacities of our members to enable their sustained engagement and secure lasting impact. Our members will be able to share and develop their expertise within our Network.



We will achieve this by focusing on:

- Consolidating, growing, and diversifying our membership, and working with our members to better resource their engagement
- Facilitating learning, development, and networking opportunities for members
- Sharing information with and between members
- Consulting with members to identify and act on areas of common concern
- Supporting members to produce expert policy analysis and hold national governments to account
- Coordinating advocacy efforts to influence national and regional policy debates

We will know we have made progress because:

By the end of 2023, our membership will have grown and diversified to be more representative and will be better resourced to engage with the work of the Network.

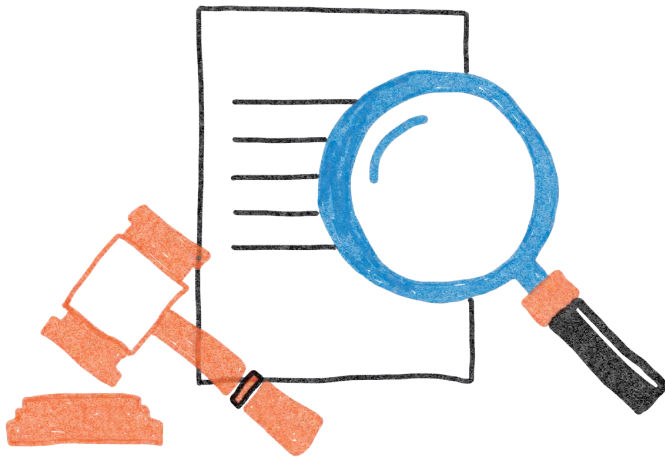
We will have created new opportunities for law and policy change across Europe, and our members will be skilled and confident in their work to address statelessness.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

Monitor, inform and promote effective law, policy and practice

We must effectively inform and frame the debate by ensuring that other actors are able to identify gaps and actively engage with legal and policy solutions to statelessness.

Our work will be more intersectional and will inform a better understanding of how law, policy and practice impacts on different stateless people.



We will achieve this by focusing on:

- Developing and maintaining tools (such as our Statelessness Index) to enable assessment and comparison of law, policy and practice across Europe
- Monitoring and analysing law, policy and practice to identify gaps and hold governments to account
- Supporting training for key national and regional decision-makers and influencers
- Supporting members and partners to undertake strategic litigation
- Engaging in human rights advocacy

We will know we have made progress because:

By the end of 2023, more European States will commit to concrete actions to address statelessness.

More countries will introduce strong legal frameworks to identify and protect stateless people and more countries will enact legal safeguards to prevent and reduce statelessness.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

Work with people affected by statelessness to inform and deliver our mission

We must build our relationships and increase opportunities to collaborate with individuals and groups affected by statelessness.

We will be accountable in our work and take steps to ensure that the decisions we take and the work we prioritise reflects the views and experiences of diverse stateless communities in Europe.



We will achieve this by focusing on:

- Engaging with stateless people to better understand their concerns, inform our work and find new ways to collaborate
- Planning collaborative activities based on the skills, competencies, and priorities of people affected by statelessness
- Collaborating with representatives of people affected by statelessness to share advocacy spaces and co-deliver tailored mentoring and capacity building activities
- Amplifying the voices of stateless communities and supporting stateless individuals to engage with media
- Finding new ways to overcome barriers to participation and challenge discrimination

We will know we have made progress because:

By the end of 2023, our work and messaging will be informed - and more often delivered – by people affected by statelessness. The voices and views of stateless people will be represented in advocacy spaces and influence the debate.

Stateless people in Europe will have better access to relevant information about their rights. Representatives of people affected by statelessness will be involved in our governance and decision-making structures.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5

Be an ethical and effective organisation

We must be an organisation where staff and volunteers are respected, valued and motivated.

We will ensure robust monitoring and evaluation of our work to evidence our impact and to effectively target our resources towards our strategic objectives.



We will achieve this by focusing on:

- Developing a fundraising strategy and maintaining robust financial management systems
- Monitoring and evaluating our work on an ongoing basis
- Developing and strengthening our governance structures
- Ensuring human resources policies are in place to maintain a diverse, safe and positive workplace
- Investing in people through learning and development and promoting wellbeing
- Working in a transparent and accountable way in everything we do

We will know we have made progress because:

By the end of 2023, we will have secured increased and diversified funding and maintained strong financial management procedures to support sustainable growth.

We will continue to be an attractive, diverse and inspiring place to work. We will have reduced our environmental impact and guaranteed the privacy rights of everyone we work with through robust data protection mechanisms.

“ Everyone has the right to a nationality



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Statelessness

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The European Network on Statelessness is a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation in England. Charity Number 1158414