

# EUROPE, YES WE WANT

We, European citizens, civil organisations, coming from villages, cities and regions from all around Europe,

We, Mayors, members of national and regional parliaments, councillors, members of the European Parliament, ...

Faced with the situation created with the arrival on our shores of thousands of people fleeing conflict in Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Eritrea and other countries, we DECLARE:

We want Europe to be again what it once was. We propose to undertake a collective action shared with people across Europe, to welcome and to look after, and respect the basic rights of these fleeing citizens, to give them shelter, security, warmth and basic services, for as long as they are unable to return freely and secure to their respective places of origin.

We reject the attitude of those member States that have so far failed to fulfill their commitments and obligations, in respect of the elementary application of international agreements on Human Rights and the universally recognized Right of Asylum,

We want to show that the instruments and capacities within our reach are able to cope with this situation of Humanitarian Crisis, the worst crisis in Europe since the Balkan crisis 25 years ago

We express our solidarity especially with Greece, which is suffering from the consequences of the decisions and defaults implemented so far by the European Institutions.

We believe that we cannot depend on a European answer based on the lack of solidarity and the negative and unacceptable reaction of those people that are driven by hate and uncertainty towards the refugees. The fears of this kind of people are not based on the fear of others, but rather are the result of the social and economic insecurity suffered by many of our citizens as a result of the crisis caused by the erroneous policy of austerity and the destruction of public services that has prevailed in Europe since the start of the financial crisis in 2008.

We express our firm commitment to assume our responsibility to welcome and provide basic services to all those seeking refuge in Europe:

- Those that are already in Europe, or another third country, in conditions lacking human dignity, such as those found in Idomeni and other parts of Greece.
- Those who come daily by high risk routes and driven by despair to one or other point of entry to European territory.
- Those who wait at the Syrian-Turkish border fleeing the conflict that has forced them out from their villages and homes.
- To all those who are already in a Member State or striving to reach one, requesting asylum and protection as long as the armed conflict in their country prevent them to returning home.

We express our clear rejection of the bilateral agreement between the EU and Turkey contrary to Human Rights and International Laws designed solely to prevent the arrival of new refugees at the EU territory or to consolidate procedures of immediate deportation of groups of citizens who have already arrived in Europe as well as asylum seekers.

We demand the immediate opening of borders and barriers that are forcing Greece to house in unacceptable conditions and against their will thousands of people seeking asylum.

We call for the suspension or a provisional non-application of the Dublin Convention, in order for it to be reviewed and updated, so as to avoid the negative effects of a literal interpretation, in contradiction with its original spirit and the demands of present circumstances.

We support, however, measures and arrangements to help Turkey, its institutions and civil society which has carried out tremendous work for over four years in welcoming refugees, and who should be given the necessary guarantees and sufficient resources.

### **Consequently and finally**

We urge the European Council, the Commission and the European Parliament to establish a program, available immediately called "Europe, yes we want". This voluntary scheme should offer a reception programme plan available to cities and regions with concrete amount of resources and capabilities that are to be made available.

We appeal to the Member States that have so far proven unable to manage this crisis: instead of yielding to the pressures of xenophobia and rejection, accept and share more solidarity amongst citizens, civil organizations, local and regional governments in favour of a humanitarian response based on European values.

We therefore commit ourselves to act in a positive and generous way, and assume the responsibilities that are ours as Europeans:

- To take the emergency measures required to help citizens in transit to Europe, both regarding their safety, their health and well-being.
- To promote and cooperate in diplomatic efforts towards peace in the area so that the appropriate conditions are created for a voluntary return of these citizens to their countries as soon as possible.
- Not to give up the demand for freedom and democracy which should in any case remain in the bilateral agreements that may be reached with Turkey or other countries.
- To ensure that the areas suffering the most pressure, particularly Greece and Turkey have the support and resources needed to deal with economic and security conditions for new arrivals, approving an immediate budgetary line for this purpose.
- From our own memory as refugees, that reminds us Europeans to have so often been forced to live dramatically; from the conviction that the present situation in Europe is putting at stake its identity and its shared future project, this manifesto is open to all those who want to join in and, all citizens that have already started or accompanied proposals and complaints in this very same way.

### **We Want Indeed**

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