

EU leaders: Change course and end your war on migrants

Following Ursula von der Leyen's recent endorsement of offshore detention centres, and other EU leaders announcing various rollbacks on asylum and refugee rights, migrant-led organisations write to EU institutions to demand alternatives to the EU's deadly border regime.

Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission, EU Interior Ministers,

We, organisations led by migrants and racialised people, along with our supporters, write to European leaders to condemn the violent, punitive and immoral turn in European migration politics in recent weeks.

In recent weeks, we, residents of Europe organising amongst both new and long-standing migrant communities, have watched as EU leaders have declared war on migrants and international law.

From illegal proposals to suspend the right to asylum and adopt offshore migrant processing models, the creation of EU 'safe' third-country lists and extended periods of internal border checks in the Schengen area, to our consistent reality of prison-like detention centres, state violence and racial profiling, illegal pushbacks and violent and unlawful deportations, European leaders have reached a point of no return.

These announcements are part of a trajectory of worsening demonisation of migrants and the complete erosion of international law. For almost a decade, the European Union has pursued violent, ineffective and expensive migration measures that expand prison-like detention centres, endorse racial profiling and facilitate pushbacks and violence at borders.

Human rights organisations have consistently framed these developments as flagrant violations of international law. We agree. However, we should also clarify that **European leaders are unashamedly emulating a fascist politics reminiscent of Europe's genocidal and colonial history.** We see the consistent demonisation and blame of our communities as a clear attempt to distract Europe's residents from decades of political, economic and environmental failures.

Rather than orient policies toward safety, protection and social provision for all, European leaders have settled for a politics of securitisation, criminalisation, and violence. The EU has

pursued migration policies geared toward criminalising our communities, militarising borders, and endorsing far-right and racist violence.

What you frame as a ‘migration crisis’, is actually a global inequality crisis. Recent announcements on migration conveniently evade responsibility for Europe’s past and present role contributing to the root causes of migration: displacement caused by climate change and environmental destruction, resource and wealth extraction, colonialism, conflict, military intervention and political destabilisation. The EU is presenting an inhuman, unworkable response to problems it itself has created and contributed to.

Attacks on migrants rights are the beginning of attacks on everybody. Anti-migrant politics and the subsequent degradation of rights have opened the door for rollbacks in women’s rights and the right to abortion, anti-gender movements, anti-worker movements and the widespread repression of civil liberties. The far-right forces that birthed this narrative and the centrist ones that normalise them are responsible for broader threats to democracy and the rule of law. Collectively, these trends disproportionately impact communities at risk of state violence, including (undocumented) migrants, racialised, queer and trans people, and sex workers.

We call on leaders to change course and present a meaningful alternative to current EU migration policy, which is illegal, immoral, and unworkable.

Instead of wasting billions on new offshore detention centres, illegal and costly deportation procedures, and the militarisation of borders, European leaders could implement policies in compliance with human rights, toward economic well being, safety and community care, and invest in long-term solutions to address climate degradation, conflict, and economic decline.

We need:

- Safe and legal routes for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees;
- Pathways to regularisation and an end to the criminalisation of people on the move;
- Address the root causes of why people flee their countries, including by ending EU investment in the militarisation and securitisation of borders, the weapons trade, fossil fuels, and other industrial strategies contributing to conflict and climate degradation in the global South;
- Policies that focus on addressing the needs of all people (including migrants, shift and gig economy workers, unpaid carers, and those in precarious work) instead of prioritising corporate profits;
- A comprehensive economic and social strategy for everyone living in Europe.

We call on European leaders to change course and end their war on migrants. Instead, reorient your policies to centre a politics of care, protection and safety for all, including migrant communities.

Drafted by:

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2. Greek Forum of Migrants – Greece
3. International Women* Space – Germany
4. Movement for Asylum Seekers in Ireland (MASI) – Ireland
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Signatories

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9. Akoma, Germany
10. Albanian Community in Greece, Greece
11. AlgoRace, Spain
12. All Faiths and None, United Kingdom
13. Almena Cooperativa Feminista, Spain
14. APROSEX, Spain
15. Ariadni A.M.K.E., Greece
16. Associació intercultural diàlegs de dona, Spain
17. Association de soutien aux travailleurs immigrés – ASTI asbl, Luxembourg
18. Association Tunisienne des Femmes Democratres ATFD, Tunisia
19. BARAC UK, United Kingdom
20. Border Criminologies
21. Cantiere, Italia
22. Centre for Information Technology and Development, Nigeria
23. Centre of legal aid “Voice in Bulgaria”, Bulgaria
24. Citizen D / Državljan D Slovenia / EU
25. Comitato 3 Ottobre – ETS, Italy
26. Conflict Kitchen Foundation / Kuchnia Konflikту, Poland
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28. Conselho de Cidadania do Brasil em Barcelona, Spain
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31. EmpowerVan, Greece / Switzerland
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33. European Network for the Promotion of Rights and Health among Migrant Sex Workers, Europe

34. European Network on Religion and Belief, Europe-wide
35. European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance (ESWA), Pan European
36. European Union of Women Marina Alta, Spain
37. Feminist Collective of Romani Gender Experts
38. Flüchtlingshilfe Iran e.V.2010, Germany
39. forRefugees, UK
40. GAT – Grupo de Ativistas em Tratamentos, Portugal
41. Ghanaian Nationals Association in Greece, Greece
42. Global Women Against Deportations, England
43. Greek Forum of Refugees, Greece
44. Hidden Goddess, Greece
45. Hoffnung leben e.V., Germany
46. HOTM, Belgium
47. IGLYO – The International LGBTQI Youth and Student Organisation, Belgium
48. Infokolpa, Slovenia
49. Ivorian community of Greece, Greece
50. KISA- Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism, Cyprus
51. Lesvos Solidarity, Greece
52. Migrant Tales, Finland
53. Migrationsrat Berlin e.V., Germany
54. Mulheres Brasileiras contra o fascismo e o racism, Spain
55. New Women Connectors, Netherlands
56. Nigerian Community Greece, Greece
57. Northern Ireland Council for Racial Equality, United Kingdom/Northern Ireland
58. One Billion Rising Frauengruppe, Germany
59. Racism and Technology Center, Netherlands
60. Red Española de Inmigración y Ayuda al Refugiado, Spain
61. Refugees in Libya, Italy, Libya
62. Refugees Welcome España, Spain
63. Revibra Europe, EU
64. Romnja Feminist Library
65. S.P.E.A.K (Muslim women collective), The Netherlands
66. Safe Passage International, Europe (UK, France, Greece)
67. Samos Volunteers, Greece
68. Sant Just Solidari, Catalunya
69. Siempre ong, Belgium
70. Solidaridad Entre PEPersonas Integrando Comunidades- SOEPIC, Spain
71. Spazio di Mutuo Soccorso, Italia
72. The German Center for Integration and Migration Research (DeZIM), Germany
73. Trans United Europe-BIPOC European trans network, France
74. VELOS YOUTH, Greece

75. WeMove Europe, Europe
76. Women in Development Europe (WIDE+), Europe
77. Women of Colour in Global Women's Strike, England
78. women's council Dest Dan e.V., BRD
79. Yoga and Sport with Refugees, Greece/ France

Supporters

80. #StopFisha, France
81. Abolish Frontex
82. ACAT Belgium, Belgium
83. Access Now, Belgium/Europe
84. aditus foundation, Malta
85. Anti Racism Movement, Lebanon
86. Anti-Racism Crew Flensburg, Germany
87. Asociación Nós Mesmas, Spain
88. Aspiration, Belgium
89. Association for Integration and Migration, Czech Republic
90. barkwende e.V Deutschland, Germany
91. Border Violence Monitoring Network
92. Bündnis90 /Die Grünen Rosenheim, Germany
93. Centre for Peace Studies, Croatia
94. Comisión Legal Sol, Spain
95. Comitato per i Diritti Civili delle Prostitute APS, Italy
96. Coordinadora Obrim Fronteres, Catalonia
97. Creación Positiva, Spain
98. ECHO100PLUS, Greece
99. Equal Legal Aid, Greece
100. ERA LGBTI Association for Western Balkans and Turkiye, Western Balkans and Turkiye
101. ESPACE P... ASBL, Belgium
102. EUR, Greece
103. European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR), Germany
104. Flüchtlingsbetreuung Herzogenaurach, Germany
105. Flüchtlingsrat Niedersachsen, Germany
106. Flüchtlingsrat Schleswig-Holstein e.V., Germany
107. Front d'habitat lesbien, France
108. Fundació Autònoma Solidària, Spain
109. Fundación Alianza por la Solidaridad-ActionAid, Spain
110. Fundacja Inicjatywa Dom Otwarty, Poland
111. Fündec foundation, Spain
112. Greek Council for Refugees (GCR), Greece
113. Greens Regensburg, Germany

114. Griesehop, Germany
115. Habibi.Works (Soup and Socks e.V.), Greece
116. Human Rights Association (İHD), Turkey
117. Integral Germany, Germany
118. Inter Alia, Greece
119. InterEuropean Human Aid Association (IHA)
120. INTERSOS HELLAS, Greece
121. Irídia – Centre per la Defensa dels Drets Humans, Spain
122. Jüdische Stimme für gerechten Frieden in NahOst e.V., Germany
123. Khebra Germany
124. Kif Kif vzw, Belgium
125. Kopanang Africa Against Xenophobia, South Africa
126. La Strada International, Netherlands
127. Leibniz Zentrum Moderner Orient, Germany
128. Mobile Info Team, Greece
129. MV Louise Michel
130. N4D, Austria
131. Panoptykon Foundation, Poland
132. PICUM, Europe/ International
133. Pride des Banlieues, France
134. Projecte Acollides feministes, Spain
135. Red en Defensa de los Derechos Digitales (R3D), México
136. Refugee Law Clinic Dresden, Germany
137. Refugee Legal Support (RLS), UK / France / Greece
138. Salud por Derecho, Spain
139. Sea-Watch
140. Seebrücke Nordfriesland
141. Servei Civil Internacional, Catalunya
142. SOLIDAR, Belgium
143. Statewatch
144. Transnational Institute
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