

INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS DAY MANIFESTO (BARCELONA, 18 DECEMBER 2018)

On December 11, the United Nations approved the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, an important agreement that recognizes migration as an intrinsic part of human experience. Seeking to lay the foundations for an improved governance of migration flows, the pact was adopted in Marrakech by over 160 governments looking to mitigate structural factors that deny people opportunity in their countries of origin, forcing thousands of people to seek a more dignified future away from home.

Today, on International Migrants Day, we want to continue to assert the rights of the people who embark on the path of migration—starting with the most basic right of all, the right to life— and call attention to the responsibility of governments to guarantee the human rights of migrants at each stage of their journey: at the origin, in transit and at the destination.

Migrant status is, by definition, a transient condition in the life of any person and should never suspension of one's rights or human dignity. Unfortunately, this is not always the case.

However, we believe that it is not enough to work for safe and dignified migration. People who have migrated and who have arrived in our country are no longer immigrants; they become citizens who add value to the collective life of our towns, neighborhoods and cities. The challenges we are facing go beyond the management of migration flows. The greatest challenge before us is, without doubt, ensuring inclusion in a society that is and understands itself to be plural and diverse. And it is this challenge—the most significant of all—that administrations close to the citizen find themselves dealing with, occupying much greater space in day-to-day governance than it has been accorded on the European and international political agenda.

It is urgent that we make a change in our priorities. We need to confront the rise, in Europe and in the rest of the world, of populist and xenophobic movements whose rhetoric to the shoulders of those who are "different." These movements are a threat to our coexistence and our liberties. Citizens' demands for equality and justice must be addressed, among many other reasons, to deprive those who preach exclusion and hatred of their pretenses. Democracy and coexistence are not compatible with current levels of inequality and poverty. Thus, we demand the best of Europe, a Europe that holds dear the values of freedom and pluralism, champions the charter of fundamental rights, and commits itself fully to democracy and the ideal of citizenship.

For these reasons, to governments with competencies in key areas of coexistence (such as social services, work, education or health), we propose the following:

- Incorporate the perspective of interculturality when addressing the challenges of coexistence, following the recommendations made by the Council of Europe, not with mere rhetoric, but through tangible actions.
- Ground all inclusion policies in specific commitments, so that no one is left out.
- Recognise and acknowledge the diversity of European societies, so that everyone feels they belong.
- Encourage interaction between people with different origins, be it in institutions, on the streets, in public squares, schools, sports clubs, cultural entities or groups of women: everywhere.

- Foster a sense of belonging in all people and promote an assumption of common values, based on equality between men and women, freedom, pluralism and democratic values.
- Ask the European institutions that this commitment be based on adequate funding of inclusion policies, incorporating this priority into the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.
- Ask that funding reach European authorities exercising powers relevant to the welcoming and inclusion of migrants, i.e. competencies in employment, social affairs, education, health, housing and promoting coexistence.

We propose that states and European institutions incorporate these priorities at the heart of the European agenda. We make this request out of a commitment to Europeanism, to a Europe that is at the service of its citizens and that defends its foundational values, which are none other than the values of coexistence in diversity, peace and solidarity.

There is no alternative to coexistence. Equity, encouragement of interaction, democratic values and recognition of diversity are the necessary conditions for advances in the construction of a positive sense of belonging to society—that is, in the construction of an inclusive "we". This will be the best safeguard against those who seek confrontation and division between people of different origins.

We defend the best of Europe, a Europe that should offer all citizens, regardless of their personal or family origin, an area of freedom, security and opportunity.