

CIVIL SOCIETY DIALOGUE ON THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN EUROPE Toledo (Spain), 20-22 October 2022

From 20th to 22nd October 2022, the [Civil Society's Dialogue on the Fundamental Rights of Migrants and Refugees in Europe](#) took place in Toledo, Spain. Leading Spanish and European organisations in the field of migration and asylum participated, as well as international bodies, public administrations, activists, the media and members of academia.

In view of the threat to fundamental rights embodied by the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, the meeting aimed to be an open space to raise recommendations from civil society on migration and reception policies, for the respect of principles upheld in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights in migration processes in Europe, and to promote the integration of migrants and refugees in our societies in general.

Invited experts discussed, amongst other things, legislative and non-legislative files of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, access to justice for migrants and refugees, the protection of migrant children, or interculturality. For SOLIDAR, the meeting will also be an occasion to formulate demands for a solidaric European approach to migration and protection, building on reflections from past encounters, such as the [Sabir Festival in Italy](#) and the [Migration and Exile conference in Germany](#).

SOLIDAR was co-organizing this event along with prominent Spanish civil society organisations defending the rights of migrants and refugees, among which SOLIDAR members [Movimiento por la Paz - MPDL](#), [ISCOD-UGT](#), [Liga Española de la Educación y la Cultura Popular](#), [Prodiversa](#) and [Solidaridad Internacional Andalucía](#).

Anne van Lancker, SOLIDAR's new President since June 2022, set the scene during the opening session. Stressing that migration is both a result of, and one of the concurring causes of, some of the most dramatic humanitarian challenges of the 21st century. Promoting increased access to rights for marginalised groups and migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers regardless of their residence status is key to achieve a social Europe and live up to the commitments under the European Pillar of Social Rights and international and European treaties.

Susanne Drake, from Willi-Eichler Akademie and Board member of SOLIDAR, took the floor during the session on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, to remind the audience of the weight of Europe's colonizer past in the shaping of today's migratory flows, and calling for EU solidarity that is manifested not only between Member States but even more crucially to the migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Milena Sobic from [Initiative for Development and Cooperation](#) presented the case of access to complaint mechanisms (or lack thereof) in Serbia. She explained that as a lot of migrants, even when granted humanitarian protection, work in the grey economy, filing a complaint in the current system jeopardizes their right to stay in Serbia and called for truly inclusive and protective complaint mechanisms.

Sreten Koceski, director of [Community Development Institute](#), in North Macedonia, pointed out that implementation mechanisms for effective institutional inclusion, so participation in decision making processes, are key elements of an intercultural approach to inclusion of MRAs.

Anne van Lancker, SOLIDAR President, called for gender-responsive European reception and inclusion policies, in the face of particular vulnerability of migrant and refugee women.

Giovanni Vanore, from [ARCI](#), spoke about Protection of children on the move and presented [Here4U](#), a project aiming to create awareness among minors and young migrants on their rights and opportunities.

The Dialogue was the occasion for the SOLIDAR delegation to discover Toledo, meet and engage with many Spanish and European stakeholders working on migration and inclusion, building new alliances and learning from each other. SOLIDAR also held a workshop of its Task Force on Migration and Inclusion to discuss regular pathways to decent lives in Europe, decentering the focus from solely the EU to look at the Global North/South inequalities and the links between migration and development/cooperation policies.

This activity has been executed in the framework of the project "Realising Social Europe For All and With All" with the financial support of the European Union, through the EaSI strand of the ESF+ programme.

