

THE MIGRATION CRISIS

Political persecution, insecurity or poverty force thousands of people to risk their lives in the Mediterranean to reach Europe. Our founding values, international legislation and our demographic crisis mean that we must face this reality together. Our common future as a political project, united by diversity and solidarity, depends on it.

The European Union's first obligation is to share responsibility for protecting people's lives at sea, controlling external borders, supporting the common management of European boundaries and of the countries that receive them first. At the same time, the EU must fight firmly against the illegal and inhuman trafficking of immigrants which is committed by both organised crime and terrorist networks. For this the EU must provide cooperation and assistance to countries of origin and transit, as well as showing a willingness to open up to legal immigration. To this end, Europe should harmonize the right of asylum.

In this context, it must create a realistic mechanism for dealing with economic migration. All forecasts indicate that the growth of the African population will continue to generate a flow that we cannot ignore.

There is therefore an urgent need to humanise migration policy and to share its management in a spirit of solidarity through genuine multi-level governance. It is essential to integrate into the decision-making processes the institutional level that receives and offers basic social services, education or health. Cities and regions are also the framework in which coexistence and integration take place. There is also an urgent need to change arrival controls to offer real and immediate alternatives to people arriving and to move towards integrated management of external borders.

It is also necessary to add into integration policies a more realistic vision of our own demographic crisis, of the depopulation of certain territories and to increase cooperation. One of the keys must be to identify and empower the best trained people in the countries of origin, promoting the return, readmission and reintegration policies in order to achieve sustainable and secure development there. This is a more positive alternative to accentuating policies that encourage the flight of talent from the regions of the world that need it most.

In the face of this enormous challenge facing Europe, the EU must have an effective, humanitarian and safe migration policy based on the values of humanity, solidarity and responsibility, which are the pillars of the European edifice and which have also guided its action.

Humanity which enshrines the primacy of life and the dignity of the human being before all circumstances.

Solidarity to admit the distribution of refugee quotas that correspond to each country, according to different variables, including population size, economic power and unemployment. For example, the Basque Government backed by our member EAJ-PNV presented the SHARE programme in different European bodies, which formulates co-responsibility in locating immigrants according to three parameters: tax revenue with a weight of 50%, population with an incidence of 30% and unemployment with 20%.

Responsibility to avoid breaking the cohesion of Western societies that fear losing their well-being and seeing their identity weaken in a social context where populist and xenophobic groups are asserting themselves in the face of citizens' fears and uncertainties.