



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FORUM ATHENS 2006

Call for an Assembly on Migrations

European Social Forum will take place in Athens, Greece in 2006. It will be a moment to exchange, discuss, reinforce our struggles and prepare common initiatives and agenda on migration issues.

The fourth ESF gives a strong place to the migrations struggles, analyses and demands within a priority axis entitled : "Migrations, asylum and equality of rights". Many seminars, workshops, events but also a thematic space will show the strength of European movement who refuse to support public policies leading to more discriminations and exclusion firstly for the migrants and finally for all of us.

The issues discuss before, during, and after the European Social Forum concern millions of EU- and Non-EU-citizens who live in a country without having Member State nationality; a number, by definition indeterminable, of persons in illegal situations; tens of thousands interned in camps inside EU or at its borders; nationals who are migrants within the States themselves; not to mention those who are candidates for travel, whatever their situation, within the EU or outside its borders. It happens after dramatic situations such as Ceuta and Melilla or during Mauritanian events.

It is obvious that more and more, the policy concerning these "migrations" is decided at the level of the Council of the European Union and "put into practice" by the Commission; national policies merely guide legislation into agreement with the directives. The cooperation at the institutional level is in place between the national governments. That is why the riposte of the social movement must be also coordinated.

The aim of this European policy is to attack the social benefits of all Europeans, whatever their status. In order to obtain a real equality of rights for all, the alternative answers must be delivered by people themselves, men, women, families and workers, of legal and illegal status, in co-operation with the unions and organisations, specific or not, which support and defend them.

More or less every day we can find all over Europe: protests and campaigns for the right to stay and equality, carried by self-organisations of refugees and migrants or by various migration-related initiatives. We need to look at the manifold ways in which migration movements and struggles confront and challenge the reality of domination and exploitation.

These struggles undermine, crisscross and attack the so-called migration management, "which is not simply aimed at keeping refugees and migrants out of Europe, but rather at promoting a process of selective inclusion, also through illegalization, of the migrants. This process corresponds to the production of a hierarchy of rights as well as of legal and political positions, that lies at the core of the material transformations of citizenship in Europe and which is far from regarding only the migrants" (from the call of the 2nd day of action). Our discussing underlined the process that build precariousness from the poorest to the all society ; from the without paper to the all labour market , from the specific rights to all our rights...

On January 31st 2004 -decided in the ESF in Paris - and on April 2nd 2005 -decided in the ESF in London - we had the first and the second European day of action on migration. They were important dates in order to deepen our networking process and to put the issue of migration at the social movement's agenda in Europe. The final assembly on migrations in Athens ESF now should highlight all the decisions taken during the meeting and give again more visibility to our demands. And it must be a main step to go further together.

Following the decisions taken during the previous WSF in Bamako, we are willing to create an international alliance against these murderous policies, based on solidarity composed by civil societies, non-governmental organizations, social movements and organizations. In the period from the Bamako Forum to the one in Nairobi (2007) we propose a year long international mobilization in defence of the right of all people to circulate freely around the world and to determine their own destiny.

The world social forum on migrations in Madrid (june 2006), the 2nd caravan for freedom of movement in Barcelona (June 2006), the antiracist meeting in Cecina (july 07) and the African-European counter summit of Rabat (july 07) will be right moments to continue our action within next weeks.

But we think it is possible to imagine also a further step in our action this year. We think it is time to start a discussion about a huge European demonstration to be held in Brussels in the next months. A demonstration that gives us a constituent moment of the new kind of European space we are imagining and struggling for. We think it is worth to discuss such a perspective in Athens, and to do it last not least in the final assembly about migration..