

Dimitris Avramopoulos
European Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs and Citizenship
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

10 March 2016, Brussels

Subject: open letter on the new proposals on migration

Dear Commissioner Avramopoulos,

The current migration and refugee crisis has posed one of the greatest challenges the European Union has experienced so far. The arrival of migrants and refugees has stretched the limits of European cooperation and put one of the fundamental rights of European citizens, free movement, at risk.

We acknowledge the European Commission's efforts to find a common response to the refugee crisis. With the European Agenda on Migration and many ambitious proposals the Commission has sought to push for decisive and joint action to counter the crisis.

We urge you to table determined and effective solutions when your proposals in the context of the European Agenda on Migration are presented this March, solutions that will enable the EU to address in a collective manner the challenges Europe faces.

Migration offers opportunities for a continent characterised by demographic decline and with labour markets in need of skilled workers. Readjusting the Blue Card regulation's strict requirements and ensuring a transparent and equal application across Europe as well as its extension to non-academic fields, such as entrepreneurs and lower-skilled migrants, will enable Member States' economies to benefit from migration. Furthermore, third country nationals should receive equal treatment to EU citizens with regards to their rights.

The reform of the Dublin regulation into a permanent and binding mechanism that ensures the fair sharing of responsibility to host asylum seekers and refugees can offer a structural solution at times of extreme strain. This mechanism should take into account the economic and social capacities of EU Member States and EEA states, as well as the preferences of asylum seekers and refugees, avoiding coercive transfers. All this should also be taken into account when devising a structured system on resettlement.

Last but not least, the core of all policies put forward in the context of the European Agenda on Migration should be that refugees and asylum seekers are, first and foremost, human beings and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. This should be reflected across the board, from ensuring access to legal asylum procedures for all and avoiding the detention of asylum seekers, to ensuring that refugees are not discriminated against when it comes to the provision of social protections.



The way Europe responds to this mass population displacement will not just define our moral compass; it will also determine whether we can utilise these challenges and turn them into an opportunity for Europe. We believe that the above is essential for a concrete and determined European response to a problem that demands common action. We urge you, as the Commissioner responsible for Migration, to take these points into account in your preparatory work on the proposals expected in March.

Sincerely,

Jo LEINEN, President of European Movement International and S&D MEP, Germany

Jean-Marie CAVADA, Vice-President of the European Movement International and ALDE MEP, France

Margrete AUKEN, GREENS/EFA MEP, Denmark

Georges BACH, EPP MEP, Luxembourg

Deirdre CLUNE, EPP MEP, Ireland

Richard CORBETT, S&D MEP, United Kingdom

Jonás FERNÁNDEZ, S&D MEP, Spain

Eugen FREUND, S&D MEP, Austria

Ana Maria GOMES, S&D MEP, Portugal

Nathalie GRIESBECK, ALDE MEP, France

Mary HONEYBALL, S&D MEP, United Kingdom

Dietmar KÖSTER, S&D MEP, Germany

Juan Fernando LÓPEZ AGUILAR, S&D MEP, Spain

Luigi MORGANO, S&D MEP, Italy

Maite PAGAZAURTUNDÚA RUIZ, ALDE MEP, Spain

Christine REVAULT D'ALLONNES BONNEFOY, S&D MEP, France

Maria João RODRIGUES, S&D MEP, Portugal

Virginie ROZIÈRE, S&D MEP, France

Alfred SANT, S&D MEP, Malta

Bart STAES, GREENS/EFA MEP, Belgium

Keith TAYLOR, GREENS/EFA MEP, United Kingdom

Róża Gräfin von THUN UND HOHENSTEIN, EPP MEP, Poland

Yana TOOM, S&D MEP, Estonia

Derek VAUGHAN, S&D MEP, United Kingdom

Carlos ZORRINHO, S&D MEP, Portugal