

**Amid significant funding cuts, civil society calls on institutional and private donors to step up and work with civil society to ensure functioning asylum systems in Europe.**

The implications of US funding cuts for humanitarian assistance and development support are severe and far-reaching, including in large displacement crises and for major refugee-hosting countries. It [is projected](#) that USAID programmes in Ethiopia, the DRC, Colombia, South Africa, Palestine, Bangladesh, Kenya, Afghanistan, and Tanzania have each been cut by over 200 million USD. The largest absolute cut is in Ukraine with 1.4 billion USD removed. In the cases of Afghanistan, Palestine and Somalia it is estimated US funding cuts represent a loss of over 1 percent of their gross national income (GNI). Compounding the impact, less dramatic but still [significant reductions in aid budgets](#) have taken place at major European donors, including the UK, France, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, and will likely also occur in Germany.

The repercussions will be felt around the world: life-saving assistance will not be provided to millions of people in need and very difficult decisions about resource allocation need to be taken. People who are forcibly displaced within their home country or across borders [will feel the impact imminently](#). While the majority will be stuck in protracted displacement internally or in neighbouring countries, others will be forced to embark on dangerous journeys to access humanitarian assistance, including towards Europe.

The impact of the funding cuts will be significant, also on asylum systems in Europe. First, cuts to support for displaced people in countries such as Ukraine or Türkiye will likely lead to more people arriving in EU Member States in search of protection. Second, the European asylum sector, which in many countries is heavily dependent on funding from institutional or private donors, is directly affected. Many civil society organisations supporting asylum seekers and refugees through services, legal aid, and support to inclusion have been hit by the end of US funding either through direct cuts or because intermediary donors or partners, such as UNHCR, have ended or reduced their support. The significant reduction in UNHCR's budget will mean that the majority of civil society organisations working on asylum in Europe will be affected. This aggravates the already adverse funding environment for organisations work on refugee rights, many of which face national governments that refuse or severely limit funding to this sector.

At the time of writing, significant funding cuts have been reported in Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Kosovo, Malta, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden and Türkiye.

As a result, at a time of increased need due to rising displacement, civil society working on asylum and migration is under huge financial strain, facing significant reductions in staffing and activities. This will leave many people seeking protection in Europe unsupported, undermine the functioning of asylum systems, and jeopardise the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum in which civil society has an important role to play.

Given this new reality, it is imperative that all relevant actors - the European Commission, Member States and private funders - reassess their priorities and address the shortfalls to prevent a crisis of asylum, reception and inclusion in Europe.

For this purpose, the undersigned organisations are calling on:

The European Commission to:

- use its mid-term review of Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the European Social Fund+ (ESF+) to ensure that funding channelled via Member States adequately supports civil society organisations working on asylum and migration.
- consider how to fund civil society directly, e.g. through resources from the AMIF thematic facility, in order to respond to the emerging needs for legal aid, counselling and other activities all of which have a high added value for the EU as they support the implementation of the Pact.
- review whether, given the changed context, Member States should be obliged to spend a certain percentage of their national programmes in support of civil society, a good practice established for EU funding for displacement from Ukraine.
- adapt national programmes under the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) to respond to the emerging needs in relation to asylum and migration.

Member States to:

- ensure that national programmes under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and the Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI) provide adequate resources for civil society organisations, that civil society are considered eligible under all relevant call for proposals and that activities include legal counselling and representation; calls should be issued promptly.
- convene consultations with affected NGOs to understand what the needs are and how they can be addressed in the short-, medium- and long-term.

Private funders to:

- re-assess funding needs for asylum in Europe, increase resources for this purpose and prioritise countries where neither national allocation of EU funds nor institutional funding reaches civil society.

Immediate action is needed now. In the medium term, the new funding reality should be reflected in the proposals and negotiations of the next Multi-annual Financial Framework which will start this year.

#### **List of signatories:**

#DiasporaVote!

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Afghanistan LGBTIQ+ Organisation (ALO)

Africa Solidarity Centre Ireland  
Amnesty International European Institutions Office  
ARCI APS  
Are You Syrious?  
ARENE (Afghan Refugees Experts Network in Europe)  
Arsis Association for the Social Support of Youth  
ASOCIACIÓN SALUD Y FAMILIA  
Association for Legal Intervention (Stowarzyszenie Interwencji Prawnej)  
AsyLex  
Belgrade Centre for Human Rights  
Better Days Greece  
Better Future  
Bulgarian Helsinki Committee  
Bundeskonzferenz der Migrant\*innenorganisationen  
Caritas Europa  
Centre for Labour Rights, CLR  
Centre for Peace Studies  
Changemakers Lab  
Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe CCME  
Civil Rights Program Kosovo  
CNCD-11.11.11  
Conselho Português para os Refugiados / Portuguese Refugee Council (CPR)  
Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (Italian Council for Refugees)  
Croatian Law Centre (hrvatski pravni centar)  
Cyprus Refugee Council  
Doras  
ECRE  
ELIX  
Equinox Initiative for Racial Justice  
Estonian Refugee Council  
EUCOMAR European Coalition of Migrants and Refugees  
European Network Against Racism  
European Network on Statelessness  
FEANTSA - European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless

Fondation pour la promotion des droits en Algérie  
Forum réfugiés  
France terre d'asile  
Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)  
Greek Forum of Refugees  
Hakunila International Organization  
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights  
HIAS Europe  
HIAS Greece  
Homo Faber Association  
Human Rights Association (İnsan Hakları Derneği - İHD)  
Hungarian Helsinki Committee  
INTERSOS HELLAS  
IRC - International Rescue Committee  
Irish Refugee Council  
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Belgium  
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Europe  
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Germany  
Jesuit Refugee Service Serbia  
JRS Portugal  
JRS Romania  
Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)  
KISA (Cyprus)  
Macedonian Young Lawyers Association  
Médecins du Monde  
METAdrasi  
Migrant Info Point Foundation  
Migrant Women Association Malta  
Migration Consortium  
Migration Policy Group (MPG)  
Mosaico azioni per i rifugiati  
NANSEN - The Belgian refugee Council  
New Women Connectors  
NGO Legis

NOMADA Association  
Ocalenie Foundation  
OPU - Organisation for Aid to Refugees  
organisation marocaine des droits humains  
Organization for Aid to Refugees  
Passerell  
PIC - Legal Center for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment  
Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)  
Polish Migration Forum Foundation  
Quaker Council for European Affairs  
Rainbow Afghanistan Organization  
Red Acoge  
RED AMINVI  
Refugee Rights Türkiye/Mülteci Hakları Merkezi  
Refugee Support Aegean (RSA)  
Safe Passage International (Greece)  
Safe Passage International in France  
Salud por Derecho  
Samos Volunteers  
SEDA Voice  
Solentra  
SOLIDAR  
SolidarityNow  
SOLWODI Deutschland e.V.  
Swedish Refugee Law Center  
Terre des hommes Foundation Lausanne  
Terre des Hommes Germany  
The Rule of Law Institute  
The Swedish Network of Refugee Support Groups (FARR)  
UBUNTU-Initiative for Peace and Development  
Ukrainian House Foundation (Warsaw)  
WE organization NL  
Xenion e.V.