

Lampedusa: 10 years of wrong 10 point-plans

JRS Europe and JRS Italy react with dismay to the European Commission's President 10 point-plan for Lampedusa. "Deterring arrivals, increasing returns and cooperating with undemocratic regimes. Almost 10 years after the tragic shipwreck of 3 October 2013, the EU continues to propose the same unacceptable actions. This shows the unwillingness to address the phenomenon from the point of view of the people forced to flee their homes. Meanwhile, the people continue to suffer." declared jointly Alberto Ares, JRS Europe's Director, and Camillo Ripamonti, JRS Italy's president.

"The EU should instead join forces to open safe and legal pathways for people seeking protection, and invest in solid and dignified reception systems, where to work on the integration and social inclusion of people from day one."

New plan, same old actions

[President Von der Leyen's 10 point-plan](#) is not the first action plan that the European Commission has produced to face an increase in arrivals at the EU's Mediterranean shores.

In 2015, Commissioner Avramopoulos, at that time in charge of migration, presented his 10 point-plan for the situation in the Mediterranean. Almost a year ago, it was the turn of the current Commissioner for Migration, Ylva Johansson, with even a 20-point action plan for the Central Mediterranean.

The red threads: prevent departures, by cooperating with largely undemocratic third countries and increasing anti-smuggling operations with the support of Frontex, increase the involvement of EU Agencies in registering and fingerprinting people arriving and step-up returns.

0/10 points for Von der Leyen's plan

No mention is made in Von der Leyen's plan of the need to safe and legal pathways to remove the need for people to embark the perilous journey through the sea.

The need for solidarity among Member States is only a quick reference about the possibility for people in Lampedusa to be transferred to other EU Member States, on a voluntary basis.

Instead, an enhanced focus is given to stepping up border surveillance and implementing border and accelerated procedures upon arrival, in line with the Commission's proposals in the EU Pact on Asylum and Migration, currently under negotiation.

The key points: Safe pathways and dignified reception

Migration is a complex phenomenon; largely driven by the inequalities of the world we live in and the human instinct to survive and seek safety and opportunities.

Blocking arrivals is not only in contrast with our legal and moral obligations towards refugees. It has also largely proven useless.

JRS Europe and JRS Italy join their voices to call for a fundamental shift in approach.

In the last phase of negotiation on the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum we ask the EU to choose for a coordinated approach to search and rescue in the Mediterranean Sea, including coordinated relocation among Member States, for increased safe and legal pathways and for robust and welcoming reception systems throughout the EU.