

EUROPE  
MUST  
ACT.

2022 - 2023

# Case for Support



## Introduction

Formed in March 2020 by a group of volunteers on the Greek islands, Europe Must Act has grown into a pan-European movement working to increase public support for people seeking asylum and secure humane European migration policy. This Case for Support outlines our understanding of the deep divisions that exist within European approaches to migration.

It explains our response as a campaigning organisation that has demonstrated sustained and effective interventions to advocate for the rights of displaced communities. It is a call for grant funding to support the activities that Europe Must Act carries out across the continent to protect human rights in the field, strengthen civil society organisations, and promote a European culture of welcome.

From March 2022 to February 2023, Europe Must Act needs to secure €156,800 to implement our programme of activities and achieve our strategic goals.

## Mission Statement

Europe Must Act (EMA) brings together volunteers and civil society organisations (CSOs) to campaign for the humane reception of displaced communities in Europe.

Through local action in European cities as well as joint-advocacy efforts of grassroots CSOs on an EU level, we aim to mobilise citizens and displaced communities across Europe to demonstrate public support for a fair and humane European policy on asylum and migration, instead of more camps, walls and deterrence.



# Our impact so far

Our work began in March 2020 in response to a human rights flashpoint in Greece. Over the first months of 2020, local populations protested new government legislation on the construction of closed refugee camps. Meanwhile, far-right groups began attacking people seeking asylum and aid workers whilst the first wave of Covid-19 put the existing refugee camps into lockdown.

The culmination of these events led a group of volunteers to begin a petition calling on the EU Commission to decongest the Aegean Islands. Within a matter of days, 160 grassroots NGOs had joined our call to action, and 100,000 individual signatures were gathered.

In 18 short months, Europe Must Act has:



**1 pilot visit**

completed with MPs and journalists in Greece



**>15 videos**

already published through the Raising Voices platform



**160+ NGOs**

mobilised under EMA campaigns and actions



**100,000+**

signatures gathered in initial petition to EU



**6 mobilisations**

organised and executed across Europe



**12 high-level**

meetings held with Commissioners and MEPs



**50+ chapters**

Established in 27 European countries



**Moria Fire Response**

Led a mass public response to the Moria Camp Fire



**2 key reports**

published on the Aegean and MPRIC camps

# Areas of work

*Europe Must Act* (EMA) builds and leverages pan-European networks in 3 areas:

## 1 Frontline monitoring and reporting

We gather evidence and produce reports including testimonies via EMA's in-field researchers and grassroots partners. Our current focus is on the construction and operation of new MPRIC camps on the Greek islands, the further securitisation of existing camps on the mainland, and ongoing human rights violations across Europe.

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## 2 City and National Chapters

we support community-led refugee solidarity efforts on a local level in countries across Europe. Through our Cities Must Act campaign, we aim to put pressure on local and national governments to engage citizens and invoke change. Simultaneously, we also leverage the power of these Chapters to call for change at the European level, demonstrating a people's movement all across Europe, demanding change.

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## 3 EU and UN Institutions

We lobby and promote dialogue directly at the heart of European politics to push for structural change. Our mandate stems from the European and displaced communities with whom we work closely in the Aegean and across EMA Chapters.



## Our work in context

Displaced communities living in camps on the Aegean islands and Greek mainland have found themselves left on the margins: geographically and politically. Since 2015, small island populations have hosted and helped thousands of asylum seekers. Now, failed EU policy and inadequate support has led to mounting frustration and a sense of abandonment, yet the authorities remain unwilling to change tack. The current construction of MPRICs across five islands means that soon people arriving in Greece by sea will face prison-like camp facilities. Meanwhile camps on the mainland are isolated and overcrowded, surrounded by concrete walls.

Grassroots solidarity and relief efforts - often led by local citizens - have played a huge role since the beginning of the crisis. But the voices of local communities and refugees remain largely ignored by those with the power to address the systemic failures of Europe's migration policies. To secure humane and human-rights based solutions, the perspectives of those on the frontline of the crisis must be directed at policy-makers and national governments.

Discover more about the context through our two key reports: The Aegean Grassroots Report (August 2020) and our No More Camps MPRIC report (February 2021).



# Our expertise

Since March 2020, Europe Must Act has played a leading role in pan-European movement building. We have brought together new and powerful coalitions of organisations and communities to participate in collective advocacy actions in support of people seeking asylum in Europe. Yet even as we go about this work, we are witnessing a shrinking in the international grassroots advocacy landscape. In just the past few months, several key organisations have ceased their advocacy work in this sector. Their exit puts additional pressure on remaining groups, such as our own, to fill a vacuum and ensure human rights are not further compromised.

Europe Must Act is able to effectively respond to this critical advocacy need, concentrating our expertise in 3 areas:

## **1** Embedded teams of experienced in-field researchers

Our team comprises long-term activists and researchers with years of experience working alongside displaced communities, and indeed people who have lived refugee experience themselves. We live and work among the communities we seek to represent. In doing so, we ensure our activities are relevant, context-appropriate and always well-informed.

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## **2** Co-creative approaches to movement building

We are not in competition with other movements. Rather, we stand for a joined up and connected advocacy response to human rights issues that leverages the skills and expertise of partner organisations across Europe. Since the beginning, our teams have come with backgrounds in collaborative facilitation styles. Volunteers and staff receive ongoing training. As a movement, we put a premium on co-creation and are always happy to put aside 'names' and 'branding' to the ends of cooperation and collective impact.

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## **3** Real-time reporting and evidence generation

Unlike many advocacy organisations, our structure of maintaining a full-time presence on the ground enables us to bring timely and eye-witness information directly from camps to parliaments, politicians and the public.

# Key Activities

Over the next year, our work comprises 4 key activities. Below is more detailed information on each activity and the key performance indicators (KPIs) we will use to measure our impact

## Activity **1** The Raising Voices media project

Displaced people are too often excluded from the political decision-making that affects their lives. Meanwhile, media coverage of migration issues often features no direct testimonies from people on the move. Through the Raising Voices media project, EMA challenges this status quo through the collection of first person testimonies and strategic work with journalists and politicians to promote the inclusion of displaced communities in migration dialogues.

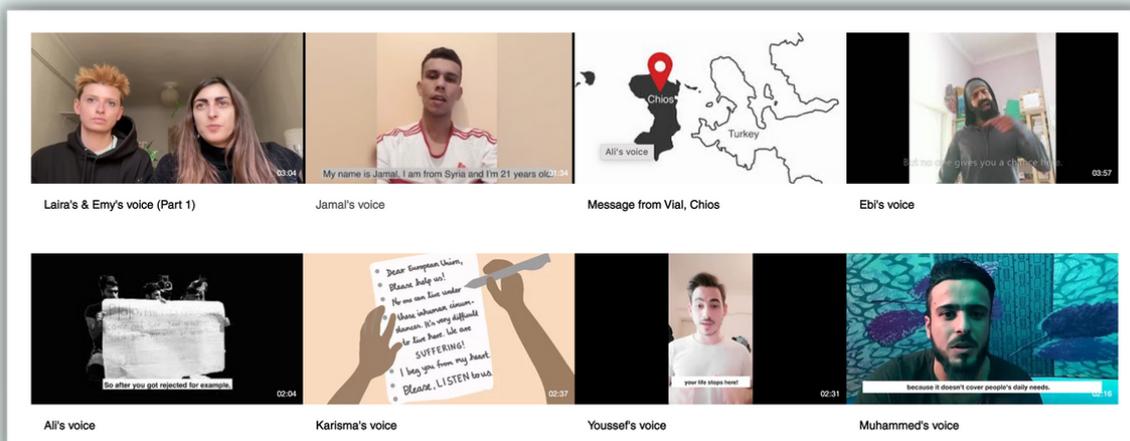
Since 2020, EMA has piloted the Raising Voices approach leading to people on the move meeting with MEPs, speaking in online conferences and participating in media interviews. We work closely with community activists in camps across Greece who are leading the way in self-reporting using their phones and social media to push for change, and we seek to amplify their own activism by sharing their stories with politicians, journalists and supporters.

Throughout 2022, we aim to expand the Raising Voices programme to train and support more camp residents who wish to share their experiences, using established safeguarding procedures to ensure that people can share their experiences safely and confidently.

### KPIs

KPI 1) Number of quotations secured in newspapers (target: 20)

KPI 2) Total audience size of Raising Voices videos (target: 50,000 viewers)



Discover more on [www.europemustact.org/raisingvoices](http://www.europemustact.org/raisingvoices)

## Activity **2**

# The European Alliance for Safe Passage & Refugee Rights

Across the political spectrum, there are many elected representatives who share our vision of a humane migration policy in Europe. Yet still the political debate continues to be dominated by those who oppose offering welcome.

Building on existing political relationships, in 2022 we will formally establish the European Alliance for Safe Passage & Refugee Rights. This caucus of political allies will comprise a coalition of cross-party MEPs and MPs that will speak up in favour of people on the move and push for progressive amendments to proposed EU migration legislation, including the EU's new Pact on Asylum and Migration.

Central to this activity will be our focus on strategically identifying politicians whose position on migration is neutral/undecided, and providing them with convincing evidence from our Raising Voices programme.

### KPIs

KPI 1) Total number of members (target: 30)

KPI 2) Number of positive interventions made by caucus members (target: 20)

KPI 3) Number of 'marginal' politicians who join the caucus (target: 15)



## Activity **3**

# Eyes and Ears: Field visits for politicians and journalists

By their very nature, Europe's borders are isolated and out of sight - and far too often, those making decisions about how our borders will be managed have little to no understanding of the realities of life on the move. Yet we know that one of the most effective ways to understand the failures of Europe's current migration policies is to see the problems first hand.

In our first year we have been able to facilitate visits to Greek reception centres for politicians, journalists and public figures, and the feedback has overwhelmingly indicated that these visits change hearts and minds. It is much more difficult to deny the prison-like conditions of a refugee camp on a Greek island once you have seen the barbed wire and CCTV for yourself. And it is much easier to see that such camps are not a solution once you have spoken directly with a resident.

Through on-the-ground presence across Europe, we are able to facilitate visits that shine a light on the individuals and groups at the sharp end of the migration system. In 2022 our aim is to build on these foundations, developing a structured and collaborative visiting programme - the Eyes and Ears field visit - that prioritises increasing the understanding and knowledge of visitors so that they are better able to advocate for change.

### KPIs

KPI 1: # of participants on Eyes and Ears field visits (target: 18)

KPI 2: Extent of influenced opinion from participants following visit



## Activity **4**

# Cities Must Act: Grassroots Activism 101 training and European Action Days

Across Europe, communities are ready and willing to stand up for the rights of displaced communities. However, local groups do not have the support or technical knowhow to take an immediate leading role. Through our Cities Must Act work, we have established, trained and mobilised community groups from across the continent, encouraging many individuals to take their first steps into public advocacy.

In our first 18 months, EMA activists founded over 50 chapters in states and cities across the continent and, under the Cities Must Act umbrella, this grassroots activism remains foundational to our campaigning model. As our work has progressed, we have seen our chapters evolve and grow, with a continued focus on Greece-related advocacy as well as targeted campaigning related to national migration issues. Across Europe, EMA activists have been involved in pushing for national legislative change, in local relocation schemes and in a wide variety of protests and campaigns.

In 2022, our aim is to continue to train community activists through a new Grassroots Activism 101 training programme, and to help mobilise activists by channeling accurate timely updates about the situation in Greece and coordinating EU-wide Action Days to increase public awareness of conditions on Europe's borders.

### KPIs

1. # of beneficiaries of grassroots Activism 101 training
2. Estimated total reach of public mobilisations
3. Instances of local policy change or progress made by EMA chapters



# Call for financial support

Between March 2022 and February 2023, Europe Must Act requires **€156,800** to implement the above activities. This will enable us to implement the 4 activities outlined above. Our key budget lines are:

## 1 EMA Staff Costs: €139,200

€139,200 is required for 4 salaried staff members. Full job description are available on request, but in summary:



### Greece Advocacy Field Coordinator

This role is a full-time advocacy lead and researcher based in Greece, working across the North Aegean Islands. The role manages a team of volunteers and leads on the Raising Voices and the Eyes and Ears field visits. This role has existed since March 2020.



### Network Coordinator

The Network Coordinator plays an important role coordinating across the entire EMA movement, between 50+ city chapters, national chapters, working groups, campaign teams, and partner organisations. The role manages Cities Must Act.



### Communications Officer

This role manages EMA's public and internal communications, as well as fulfilling certain internal administrative functions for the organisation.



### EU & UN Advocacy Coordinator

This role is based in Brussels and acts as a high-level link with the European Union and other parliaments. The role leads The European Alliance for Safe Passage and Refugee Rights, and supports Raising Voices and recruitment for the Eyes and Ears visits.

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## 2 Project & Campaign Costs: €10,200

€10,200 is required for campaigning costs. This includes digital tools for online campaign actions, expenses for travel and for a supporting Experts by Experience group. It also covers bursaries for our annual EMA Summit, bringing activists from across Europe together.

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## 3 Capacity-building costs: €7,400

Our capacity-building budget of €7,400 includes training activities for project staff, chapters and partner organisations (including facilitating our Grassroots Activism 101 course).

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**For further information, please email Jacob Warn [here](#)**