



# Help is no crime: stand with volunteers against the criminalisation of solidarity

***The arrest of Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder is the latest case of a worrying trend towards the criminalisation of solidarity in Europe. The two volunteers were arrested by the Greek authorities on 21 August for **helping refugees and migrants** arriving by sea on Lesbos island. With this joint letter, European civil society organisations call on the Greek authorities to release Sarah and Sean while their trial is pending.***

**Sarah Mardini and Seán Binder** – who are accused of smuggling by Greek Authorities – **are currently in pre-trial detention**. Sarah became known when she and her sister [pulled a boat to safety and saved a dozen refugees in 2015](#). Like many individuals and organisations providing support and first aid to migrants and refugees across Europe, the two volunteers could face jail time.

European civil society actors have continuously opposed the intimidation and punishment of volunteers and non-governmental organisations. State practices that criminalise EU citizens for their solidarity with migrants and refugees **are intolerable and risk our fundamental European values of justice and human rights**.

Charges against Sarah and Seán occur in a broader context of a pan-European trend towards criminalising solidarity. As part of the [#WelcomingEurope](#) European Citizens' Initiative, hundreds of civil society organisations and thousands of European citizens are **fighting back against these restrictive policies that have created a hostile environment for people who help refugees and migrants**.

Through this official EU tool, 1 million signatures from European citizens have the power to get the European Commission to comply with our joint-demand: **end the criminalisation of solidarity acts across Europe**.

[Join the call](#) to #FreeSarahAndSean

Tell EU leaders that **helping people in need is no crime** by signing the petition:  
[www.weareawelcomingeurope.eu](http://www.weareawelcomingeurope.eu)

Follow and share: #HelpIsNoCrime #FreeSarahAndSean

## Signatories

1. *Migration Policy Group*
2. *Picum*
3. *VolontEurope*
4. *JRS*
5. *Emmaüs Europe*
6. *AEDH*
7. *Sick of waiting*
8. *CCME*
9. *Migrant Voice*
10. *International Committee on the Rights of Sex Workers in Europe*
11. *Refugees Welcome Denmark*
12. *Maisha e.V. African Women in Germany*
13. *Association for Integration and Migration*
14. *Federación SOS Racismo*
15. *Center for Legal Aid - Voice in Bulgaria*
16. *FLEX*
17. *La Strada International*
18. *Consortium of Migrants Assisting Organizations*
19. *Health Centre for Undocumented Migrants*
20. *Medinetz Mainz e.V.*
21. *Verenigde Protestantse Kerk in België – Eglise Protestante Unie de Belgique*
22. *Jugendliche ohne Grenzen - Youth without borders*
23. *Rosengrenska*
24. *LEGIS Volunteers*
25. *Medibüro Kiel e.V*
26. *Secours Catholique*
27. *Parents International*
28. *Borderline-Europe*
29. *Afrique Culture Maroc*
30. *Stichting LOS*
31. *SB OverSeas*
32. *The Salvation Army Europe*
33. *ForumFer*
34. *Menedek*
35. *J&P*
36. *SOS Racism*
37. *ASTI*
38. *Greek Council for Refugees*
39. *Mundo en Movimiento*
40. *Solidarity now*
41. *HIAS*
42. *Human rights league*
43. *La Cimade*
44. *Oxfam Belgium*
45. *Passerell*
46. *Liga voor de Rechten van de Mens - Dutch League for Human Rights*
47. *CNCD*
48. *Positive Action*
49. *European Network of Migrant Women*
50. *New Europeans*
51. *Hellenic League for human rights*
52. *LIDU- Lega italiana dei Diritti dell'Uomo*
53. *Oxfam Germany*
54. *Welcoming Europe: Per un'Europa che accoglie*
55. *Réseau Education Sans Frontières*
56. *Ligue des droits de l'Homme*
57. *League for Human Rights – Civitas*
58. *ENAR*
59. *JRS Greece*

We are a welcoming Europe  **LET US HELP!**

60. The Greek Forum of Refugees



#sickofwaiting



We are a welcoming Europe  **LET US HELP!**



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**FOCUS ON  
LABOUR  
EXPLOITATION**



**KIRKENS  
BYMISJON** HELSESENTERET  
FOR PAPIRLOSE MIGRANTER

  
Jugendliche ohne Grenzen



 **Legis**

**Maisha e.V.**  
African Women in Germany  
Afrikanische Frauen in Deutschland 

**MEDIBÜRO KIEL**  
MEDIZINISCHE HILFE FÜR  
MENSCHEN OHNE PAPIERE 

**medinetz  
mainz** 

**migrant  
oice** 

  
**resf** Réseau Education Sans Frontières



**LIDU**  
Lega Italiana  
dei Diritti dell'Uomo ONLUS

  
Liga Portuguesa  
dos Direitos Humanos - Civitas

**borderline-europe** 

  
**Secours  
Catholique  
Caritas France** **ENSEMBLE,  
CONSTRUIRE  
UN MONDE JUSTE  
ET FRATERNEL**