



# EU FACILITATION DIRECTIVE

## WHAT IS THE FACILITATION DIRECTIVE?

The Facilitation Directive aims to stop undocumented migrants from unlawfully entering, moving within, and living in EU Member States. It helps to fight organised smuggling rings and people who want to exploit undocumented migrants.



However, the Directive also gives Member States the option to punish those who offer humanitarian assistance to these people. This could include emergency shelter, food, or medical attention.

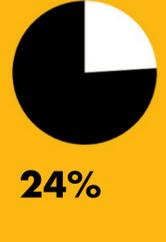
## MIGRATION: BY THE NUMBERS



Number of migrants and refugees who arrived in Europe in 2016



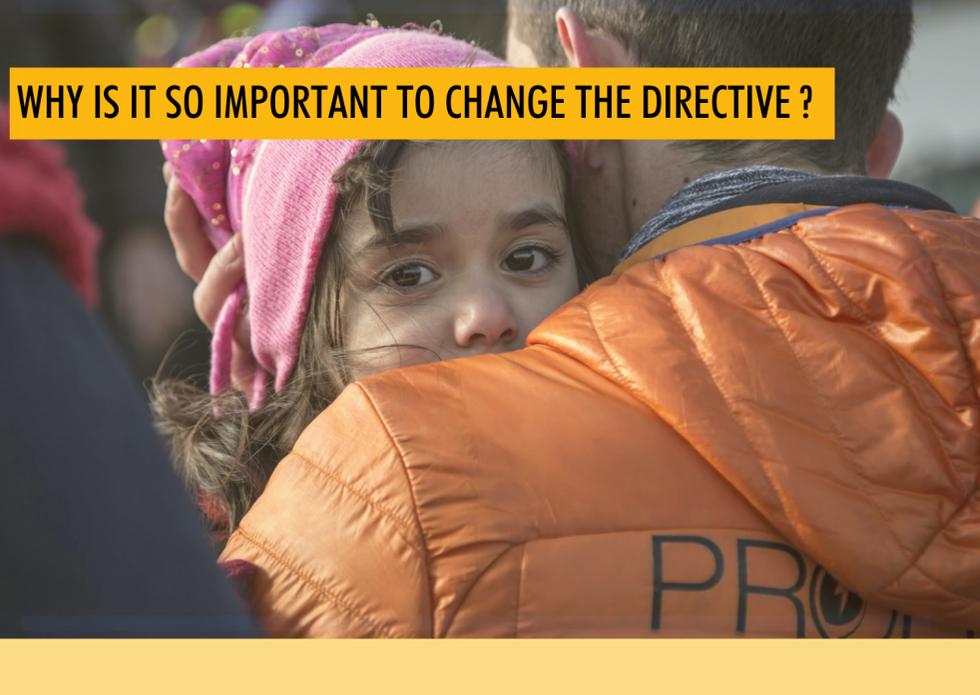
Number of migrants and refugees who drowned while trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea



Percentage of migrants and refugees who are unaccompanied minors



Number of civilian casualties of the war in Syria, where the majority of migrants and refugees come from



## WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO CHANGE THE DIRECTIVE ?

Manuel Blanco is a Spanish fire fighter.

He is part of the organisation PROEM-AID and had been volunteering on the Greek island of Lesbos since 2015. Together with the Greek authorities, he has saved the lives of countless migrants and refugees in danger at sea.

But in January 2016 Manuel was arrested. Because he has been pulling drowning men, women and children to safety, he has been accused of people smuggling.

Because of the Facilitation Directive, Manuel now faces up to ten years in jail.

## WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

Social Platform wants the EU to protect those offering humanitarian assistance to undocumented migrants from punishment. One important way to do this is by revising the 'humanitarian clause' of the Directive.



Volunteers, landlords and health care professionals should not have to report undocumented migrants they encounter - all this will do is put them off seeking the help they so desperately need, and will put lives at risk.

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In cases of abuse and exploitation of undocumented migrants, systems for reporting should be developed that protect both the service provider and the undocumented migrant.



## NEXT STEPS:

In early 2017 the European Commission proposed not to revise the Directive, believing there was not enough evidence that humanitarian assistance is being punished by Member States.

Despite the Commission's decision not to ensure protection for people like Manuel, Social Platform and our allies will continue to campaign for the decriminalisation of solidarity.

Please inform us if you have knowledge about humanitarian assistance being punished or prevented by contacting [platform@socialplatform.org](mailto:platform@socialplatform.org).

## MORE INFO:



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Sources: European Commission; World Economic Forum; Eurostat; UNHCR; World Vision; EASO; I Am Syria; PROEM-AID. Published by Social Platform, May 2017.