

FOR FREEDOM WITHOUT FEAR

ASSEMBLY OF MIGRANTS

MODENA, PIAZZA DELLA CITTADELLA – 19 MAY, 3 P.M.

On March 24th, hundreds of migrants, men and women, crossed the streets of Bologna to oppose the racism that kills. They came from the neighborhoods and reception centers of Bologna, Modena, Reggio Emilia, Ferrara and Rimini. The demonstration has shown the anger of those who have lived in this country for years with a residence permit for work and those who escaped from the wars, violence, rape and poverty and now see their life in danger. It showed our strength: our ability to speak to break the silence they want to force us to, our willingness to organize ourselves against the isolation in which they want to confine us.

In recent years, the democratic government has built on our insecurity the promise of security for those who, despite being an Italian citizen, is increasingly precarious and poor. We know that those who won the last elections promised more rejection and mass expulsion. After the demonstration in Bologna, however, we also know that we can fight together against the institutional racism that divides Italians, migrants and asylum seekers, against the blackmail of the reception system that decides our stay on the basis of provenance and willingness to work for free.

There is no more time to be afraid: it was shown by the migrant women that during the demonstration spoke against the double racism that they live every day, as women and as migrants. It was demonstrated by the many migrants, asylum seekers and workers who denounced their common exploitation. It is time to raise our heads to build a mobilization of migrants and Italians, women and men, capable of fighting racism. We have therefore decided to start a process of assemblies in different cities of Emilia-Romagna to discuss how to maintain and expand our initiative.

European directives, Italian laws and the way in which they are applied by police stations, prefectures and local administrations (not only) of Emilia Romagna limit the freedom to move, force us to long waiting (up to 2 years) for territorial commission, deny the essential documents to live and work, if not in absolute poverty, or impose the blackmail of unpaid work. Not only does the Emilia-Romagna commission decide with increasing frequency to deny the right to asylum, but even the courts increasingly reject appeals. Asylum seekers must also undergo a series of procedures illegitimately demanded by the police stations, that delay and often prevent the issuance of the permit: in some police stations the declaration of hospitality and/or residence is requested, in others the home owners are summoned to certify the domicile of migrants waiting for renewal, in some cases even the police is sent to conduct nightly inspections in homes. As if that were not enough, for those without a home, it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain residence because many municipalities illegitimately demand that migrants apply at social services, which often act as a filter (and without residence, many social and civil rights are lost). Police stations and local administrations thus act above the law, frightening and humiliating the women and men who have sought asylum!

In this way, police stations, prefectures and municipalities prepare the ground for the policy of expulsions. With their choices in the management of reception system they produce clandestinity, the same clandestinity to which migrants, women and men who after years in this country cannot renew the permit due to lack of income or work, are condemned. A clandestinity to which is added the threat of detention, if it is true, as has been announced, that the new "Detention and expulsion center" will open in Modena. Our challenge is to make this solution unfeasible, to conquer the freedom to build a better life.