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## **European asylum and migration policy: Exercise solidarity, share responsibility, show leadership**

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The Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) have urged heads of the European Institutions to exercise solidarity, share responsibility, show leadership in regard to European asylum and migration policy.

The two ecumenical organisations have issued a joint letter on 6 December, addressing Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, Charles Michel, President of the European Council and David Sassoli, President of the European Parliament.

“We hold dearly the inviolable dignity of every human being created in the image of God and are deeply committed to the concepts of the common good, global solidarity and a society welcoming strangers,” reads the letter. “It is against this background that we address you today on the issue of a comprehensive, protection and human rights oriented EU asylum and migration policy.”

The two organisations have made strong recommendations to the EU institutions urging them to facilitate a comprehensive, preferably long-term, legally sound mechanism for Search and Rescue at the EU's southern border. They must “adopt a system of relocation of those rescued at sea as well as those arriving in the member states at the EU external border,” the letter says.

Dr Torsten Moritz, General Secretary of the CCME said that “at the moment EU asylum and migration discussions focus very much on protecting borders and keeping migrants and refugees outside Europe. Therefore, for churches it is especially in this time of the year important to underline that discussions should focus on protecting and welcoming humans – here in Europe.”

CEC President Rev. Christian Krieger said, “the church leaders have confirmed in their last year's [Christmas statement](#) that Christians around Christmas remember Jesus as a refugee, who took refuge in Egypt.” He went on to say that “this remembrance should inspire us for a ‘fresh start’ in European asylum and migration policy – as promised by the European Commission President von der Leyen.”

The letter also reminds that migration is and will be a feature of life in Europe in an increasing number of member states and can, if well organised, contribute to wealth and social harmony in the EU.

“Churches across Europe have over decades, and in particular since 2015, contributed massively to a structure and culture of welcome. We will continue to do so. We also stand

ready to support those defending Christian values and practice through loving our neighbour,” affirms the joint letter.

[Read full text: European asylum and migration policy: exercise solidarity, share responsibility, show leadership](#)

[Read more about the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe](#)

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