



## Call for a Humanitarian Visa

**We, the VisaWie?!-campaign, don't want to continue to idly watch the directionless and inhuman asylum politics and would be happy to win you over as allies in a campaign on the topic of „humanitarian visa“.**

**We demand a humanitarian visa that enables people to legally enter Europe and apply for asylum without exposing themselves to danger. We would be happy to discuss the details of this demand as much as a possible campaign in a dialogue with you and are happy about feedback of any kind.**

„We cry out, once again and over and over. For the dead of the last 20 years, the dead of yesterday. Nobody would have to die in the sea if there were legal and safe ways to enter“ (alarmphone.org). We regularly receive horrifying news about migrants who died on their way to Europe. In the aftermath of those news we regularly see an outcry throughout the media that quickly vanishes. Everything that comes to the minds of decision-makers in politics seems to be far from the requirements of the real world. The european pact on migration and asylum, following the example set by the EU-Turkey-deal relies on isolation. We don't want to continue watching this development without acting. We demand legal and safe ways into the EU!

A possibility to avoid life-threatening escape routes is the issue of humanitarian visa. This visa is issued by the embassies in the countries of origin and entitles to a safe journey via plane to the EU, to apply for asylum there. Directive 2001/51/EC [rules out this possibility](#). Of course it is only possible to apply for asylum in places with access to an embassy. It has to be possible to file an application in neighbouring countries if the local embassies are closed. The costs for the flight would have to be paid by the applicants. However, they are usually a lot cheaper than the dangerous escape routes via land or sea. Criteria concerning the conditions of such a visa have to be discussed. Our idea of a humanitarian visa is explicitly not limited to a certain period or selected nationalities. It therefore differs from a humanitarian admission program. The humanitarian visa needs to be defined as a basic right, not an act of mercy. We see this overview as a starting point for further thoughts and considerations how to put a humanitarian visa into practice.

The idea of a humanitarian visa is neither a new one nor did we invent it. There have been made claims to apply such a visa by different organisations and initiatives like for example [ProAsyl](#), the [UNHCR](#), or church organizations and it was actually implemented in a few countries as well. The humanitarian visa is therefore not an unrealistic idea but already tested. One of the countries that have implemented a humanitarian visa program is Argentina. It enables a person or an

organization in Argentina to turn towards the migration office and apply for a visa for another person in Syria. Brazil has a humanitarian visa that is only valid for Syrians and Haitians. Up to today Brasil issued 8000 of those visa and granted asylum to 4000 applicants.

These programmes can be seen as orientation or inspiration for us, but they obviously bring some unsolved problems with them and pose new questions. That is why our call for a humanitarian visa goes further than a humanitarian admission programm.

Although the above mentioned EU-migration-pact leaves very little hope for a change of mind in politics, we do see positive signals in the direction of a humanitarian visa. In the current version of the EU visa codex the parliamentary committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs (LIBE) published a document that contains suggestions for elements of a possible humanitarian visa. [Amendment 15](#) says that „the possibility to apply for a visa out of humanitarian reasons at any consulate or embassy of the member states should be created“. This is of course only a proposal that is being negotiated and requires the approval of the European Council. We still see it as a positive and hopeful sign.

What do we want to do? Why do we write to you?

As a group that up to now exclusively focussed on matters of German and European visa politics, we didn't see the development of ther German asylum an refugee policies as our task, but we can't close our eyes and continue watching the European isolation politics without doing anything ([www.visawie.org](http://www.visawie.org)). We look at the humanitarian visa as an intersection between the work of anti-racist refugee organisations, self-organized refugee organisations and ours. To take responsibility and fight for a humanitarian visa together we want to develop the contact and cooperation with many other organisations that also commit to the ideals of freedom of movement, anti-racism, the same rights for all and against exclusion.

We are imagining an alliance, that fights together in a campaign, but could also carry out loosely connected and independent acts. Up to now we do only have a vague idea of such a campaign. It could contain creative and non-creative forms of protest on the street, a wide range of PR-activities, that creates sensibility towards this topic and keeps a watchful eye on institutional politics. We do for sure want to plan and carry out a campaign as a group though – a wider range, more financial ressources and a more diverse range of perspectives are all reasons that speak in favour of designing the initiative with you.

This is we write to you.

With this proposal we try to be as concrete as possible and at the same time as open as necessary. This is why would be very grateful for any feedback with your points of view or proposals, to create a wide movement for a humanitarian visa. You are welcome to write us an e-mail, if you generally share the idea, but hold another opinion on some points.

Of course we are open for a direct exchange, available via phone and would also welcome a meeting in person.

And we would be very glad, if you could imagine to fight for a humanitarian visa together with us.

**VisaWie?** Against discriminating visa processes! Is a network of different organisations and associations who speak out for extensive changes in the German and European process of conceding visa. We demand a transparent and fair visa process and the abolition of the criteria „intent to return“ as a requirement for the issuance of a national visa.

VisaWie? Against discriminating visa procedures!  
Homepage: [www.visawie.org](http://www.visawie.org) E-Mail: [info@visawie.org](mailto:info@visawie.org)