

Network RiVolti ai Balcani  
Network Diritti, Accoglienza and Solidarietà Internazionale del FVG  
Ernesto Balducci Ong

in partnership with Articolo 21 FVG:

# Confinement camps in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the responsibilities of the European Union

International Conference

(Languages: Italian and English, in-person and online)

Centro Ernesto Balducci - Zugliano (UD, Italy)  
Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2022

"Many people - many nations - can find themselves holding, more or less wittingly, that 'every stranger is an enemy'. For the most part this conviction lies deep down like some latent infection; it betrays itself only in random, disconnected acts, and does not lie at the base of a system of reason. When the unexpressed dogma becomes the major premise in a syllogism, then, at the end of the chain, stands the Lager"

Primo Levi



Photo: Matteo Placucci

## PROGRAM

### SATURDAY 7 MAY 2022

#### 10.00 am - 10.45 am • Registration

- Opening greetings from **don Pierluigi Di Piazza**, chair of Centro Balducci; greetings from **Annalisa Comuzzi** and **Michele Negro**, Rete Diritti, Accoglienza e Cooperazione Internazionale of FVG

#### 11.00 am - 1.00 pm • Opening panel - First part

Chaired by **Fabiana Martini** (Articolo 21 FVG)

- The reasons why we talk about the existence of an international confinement camps' system organised by Europe. Introduction by RiVolti ai Balcani
- The externalisation of asylum right to third countries operated by the EU. An overview, presentations by ASGI
- Memories of violence, European amnesia and strategies of resistance among migrants crossing the Mediterranean, Monica Massari, University of Milan

#### 1.00 pm - 2.00 pm • Buffet break at the Balducci Centre

#### 2.00 pm - 5 pm • Second panel

Chaired by **Annalisa Camilli** (Internazionale)

- The use of technology in violation of rights; the case of Frontex, surveillance and risk analysis, Jane Kilpatrick, researcher of Statewatch
- The systematic nature of pushback at the EU's external borders, Milena Zajovic e Alexandra Borgos, BVMN (Border Violence Monitoring Network)
- The Broken Promise of Transforming the European Union into an Area of Freedom, Security and Justice, Emilio De Capitani, former secretary Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)
- The failure of the asylum system in Europe and its correlation with the confinement camps, Tineke Strike (online) and

Pierferfrancesco Majorino, member of the European Parliament, and a representative of ECRE (European Council of Refugees and Exiles)

#### 5.00 pm - 5.30 pm • Break

#### 5.30 pm - 8.00 pm • Confinement camps study cases

- Turkey - **Adriana Tidona**, Amnesty International e **Mahmut Kacan**, lawyer a Van (Turkey)
- Greece - **Martina Tazzioli**, Goldsmiths College, University of London e **Jacopo Rui**, Ong One Bridge to Idomeni

### SUNDAY 8 MAY 2022

#### 9.00 am - 2.00 pm • Confinement camps study cases

#### 9.00 am - 11.45 am • First part

- North Macedonia - **Erminia S. Rizzi** e **Ivana Stojanova** (Progetto Medea - Asgi)
- Serbia - **Nikola Kovačević**, avvocato (Belgrado, Serbia)
- Bosnia and Herzegovina - **RiVolti ai Balcani** e **Gorana Mlinarević**, researcher (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

#### 11.45 am - 12.15 pm • Break

#### 12.15 pm - 2.30 pm • Second part

What emerges from the analysis of the "country-cases" examined? Similarities and differences. Open debate and definition of final recommendations

Chaired by **Duccio Facchini** (Altreconomia)

#### 2.30 pm Conclusions

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rete.rivoltiaibalcani@gmail.com

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# Confinement camps in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the responsibilities of the European Union

## International Conference

(Languages: Italian and English, in-person and online)

*"Forced migration is not a kind of 'tourism'! And our sinfulness leads us to think: 'Those poor people, those poor people!', and with those words, 'poor people', we blot everything out. This is today's war: the suffering of our brothers and sisters, which we cannot pass over in silence. Brothers and sisters who left everything behind to get on a boat, in the dark of night, and then... without knowing if they would ever arrive. And all those who were turned away and ended up in the concentration camps, true places of torture and enslavement. Such is the story of this developed civilization that we call the West"*

*Pope Francis, Parish Church of the Holy Cross in Nicosia, Friday, 3 December 2021*

## Targets and goals

The aim of the seminar is to examine, with a multidisciplinary approach with both academics and human rights activists from different countries, an issue that is extremely relevant but silenced, when not openly denied: **the ever-widening spread of places aimed at a temporary "reception" of forced migrants, which, on closer inspection, have the real purpose of containing them in a degraded space** that only ensures their minimal physical survival, compressing the exercise of the fundamental rights and **denying them a clear legal status**. Where is possible for people to access an **asylum procedure**, the confinement system is actually organised to discourage or make the access to the procedure very difficult or almost impossible.

**The setting up of camps is presented as a need dictated by the existence of an emergency context, but there is almost never any real emergency situation to justify these choices.**

The reception/confinement structures are deliberately located in **extremely peripheral areas**, using as a the justification vague security reasons or as a necessity imposed by multiple reasons and external constraints. This happens also when there are no reasons or when difficulties could be overcome. If concrete isolation is not possible or only partially possible, **it is created by limiting all possible forms of contact of the migrants with the outside world**, putting in **place forms of detention** based on legal assumptions or more widely on practices and factual situation, so that the perception of the camps by the surrounding society is that of a dangerous place inhabited by people to be avoided.

Even though they are based on an emergency approach, i.e. as transitory realities, **once they are set up the camps appear immutable**; the passage of time does not produce any improvement in the internal material conditions because, even in the case of reduced presences, each camp must remain at the lowest possible level of services in order to produce living conditions that are intolerable in the long term.

**The camp is therefore designed in this sense for people who "unfortunately" exist but should not. The camps, both in their setting up and in their management (often highly militarised) drain high economic resources** even if they do not produce any positive impact on the territory where they are located, nor does it produce any growth in the reception system of the country

hosting these structures; the economic management of the services inside the camps is often concentrated in the hands of a few subjects.

The confinement camps, as briefly described above, are an **indispensable tool for the implementation of the EU's "externalisation" policies and are therefore set up in countries outside the EU and mainly in neighbouring countries.**

By analysing the choices implemented by the EU for the management of asylum applications in the countries of first entry, it emerges that the Union is pushing for the creation of reception facilities to be built in areas considered peripheral or in countries considered "buffer" or marginal, which share many of the peculiar characteristics of the camps of confinement.

As is not possible since it is not possible, in this case, to leave the legal status of the "guest" completely undefined, the procedure for examining the asylum applications of the people hosted in these facilities is carried out in a hyper-accelerated manner and with the minimum possible procedural guarantees. In particular, through the legal fiction of "non-entry", the forced migrant, even if physically present within the European Union, legally remains outside and at the end of the procedure, **if the application for protection is rejected, the person can be removed in a manner almost entirely lacking in adequate guarantees.**

The general objective of the conference organised by RiVolti ai Balcani, Rete Dasi FVG and Centro Ernesto Balducci, in partnership with Articolo 21 **is therefore to propose a new interpretation of the dangerous policies implemented by the European Union on migration, especially forced migration.**

This is done without proposing any comparison, which would be improper, with the tragedies of the concentration camps that characterised the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also without underestimating the severity of the current situation characterised by important and extensive violations of the fundamental human rights of migrants and refugees.

With this in mind, the work of the conference will conclude with the adoption of a final document of recommendations which, translated into several languages, will be disseminated at European level.

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