

# Solidarity City

## A just city for all – how does that work?

Solidarity Cities in the US, Canada, UK, Italy and Spain stand up for the rights of Refugees and Sans Papiers for a long time. The communal action level is appropriate for this because all institutions can agree on a solidarity practice.

**What is new about this?** Activist groups, institutions and even municipal administration are pulling in the same direction, whether it is health care, job hunting, finding a place to live, or any other issue of day to day life.

**What is the idea behind it all?** We want to create a city that is worthwhile living in for all habitants. A social community works best if everybody can actually build their lives in it autonomously. Everyone must be enabled to live, work and connect with others as they want. We do not accept that only people who carry a German passport and have enough capital will succeed achieving this. We demand a City for all!

## We join the international network of Solidarity Cities!

### Illegalization is a safety risk

People of different origins live together in every city. Not all citizens have a German passport, not everybody has a secure resident permit status. This results in some people having very limited access to social benefits. The law for social benefits for asylum seekers expects them to live on an even lower base than what Hartz IV provides (current term for social benefit in Germany). Others have to live completely without any benefit from the state. As undocumented persons they need to avoid almost any contact with the authorities. Persons who are only tolerated ("Duldung") live in a state of constant insecurity under the threat of deportation. Illegalized people become invisible. They can not send their children to school or kindergarten, afford rudimentary health care and they are forced to stay out of work or to work under bad conditions. The possibility to be proactive and selforganized is impeded.

### Don't ask, don't tell – Actively ignoring the resident permit status

A new class of people is formed. They have no or little rights, depend on governmental help and social welfare and are forced into passivity. This not only overlooks human potentials and creates unnecessary costs, but ignores Human rights and threatens the social life in the cities. Exemplary, illegalised people are out of the question as witnesses before court. Also giving first aid can be dangerous for them. In most cases however it is not even necessary nor obligatory for authorities,

schools, medical practices or clinics to require data concerning the resident permit status, let alone to pass them on. Therefore „Don't ask, don't tell“ speaks of a practice which is the minimal consensus for all actors in a Solidarity City.

### Cities of Refuge – Sanctuary Cities Solidarity Cities: a worldwide network

Since 1970, 250 cities have declared themselves as Cities of Refuge. They want to provide access to public services for all and refuse to collaborate with repression against illegalised people and deportations. They call themselves Cities of Refuge, Sanctuary Cities or Solidarity Cities – the concept being basically the same. In the US Sanctuary Cities have a higher average household income, less unemployment, and less crime compared with communities who don't participate in the network. In Germany Cities of Refuge are also possible. They can provide a better and safer communal living. Groups and alliances in many German cities are planning to participate in the international network. Also in Switzerland there are current movements to facilitate easier living conditions for illegalised people.

### Solidarity Cities in Germany

Cities are liable for the welfare of all citizens, not only for those with a German passport. Nationality and resident permit status should not result in second or third class citizens. All inhabitants of a city benefit when social solidarity is practised. When people with a

precarious resident permit status can participate actively at the society, work, live, learn and provide for themselves. In the international movement of Solidarity and Sanctuary Cities alliances of solidarity action groups i.e. with municipal administrations, healthcare authorities, schools, trade unions, and also with police departments can be found. All of them act for various reasons for the assumption that segregating the city into legal, so called tolerated and illegalized persons causes problems for communal living. We call a case for communal politics, local institutions, (i.e. Kindergarten, schools, companies, chambers, clinics) and civil society to join the movement of Sanctuary/ Solidarity Cities. Let us discuss which communal spaces we can demand to use to that end.

### More Information

About the concept of Solidarity Cities and about the actual international state of affairs you can find for exemple here:

[www.solidarity-city.eu](http://www.solidarity-city.eu)  
[www.solidarity-city-berlin.org/about-us](http://www.solidarity-city-berlin.org/about-us)  
[www.fluechtlingsforschung.net/staedte-der-zuflucht](http://www.fluechtlingsforschung.net/staedte-der-zuflucht)  
[www.fluechtlingsforschung.net/sanctuary-cities-inder-brd](http://www.fluechtlingsforschung.net/sanctuary-cities-inder-brd)  
[www ffm-online.org/2017/02/16/sanctuary-cities-einmodell-fuer-europa](http://www ffm-online.org/2017/02/16/sanctuary-cities-einmodell-fuer-europa)  
[www.toronto.nooneisillegal.org/demands](http://www.toronto.nooneisillegal.org/demands)  
[www.cityofsanctuary.org](http://www.cityofsanctuary.org)

## New initiatives for a Solidarity City

There are initiatives in a bunch of cities -  
our goal is to network and support each other

**Augsburg** At the beginning of 2017 the initiative „Augsburg – Solidary City of Refuge“ was founded. Coming from the local refugee-council a broad alliance of municipal groups are working towards Augsburg becoming a City of Refuge in which migrants in need can find a new home.  
✉ [fluechtlingsrataugsburg@gmail.com](mailto:fluechtlingsrataugsburg@gmail.com)

**Berlin** Solidarity City is a network of organisations of individuals and was founded in 2015. Our organisation is an assembly of migrants, refugees, and illegalised people, as well as groups of people who can help in respective situations, and other supporters.  
✉ [kontakt@solidarity-city-berlin.org](mailto:kontakt@solidarity-city-berlin.org) ♥ [solidarity-city-berlin.org](http://solidarity-city-berlin.org)

**Bern** „All of us are Bern“: Not where we come from, but where we live and our mutual future should be in the centre of focus. The Café Cosmopolis where those who are targets of racism can meet and communicate, a work group against racial profiling, as well as an initiative for a Bern City-ID-Card belong to the network. Right from the beginning people without documents were included.  
✉ [wir-alle-sind-bern@immerda.ch](mailto:wir-alle-sind-bern@immerda.ch)

**Bremen** We see ourselves as a municipal network that connects existing infrastructure and already ongoing fights wanting to reinforce them. We are fighting for equal rights and social participation for all people whether it concerns medical health care, education or political participation.  
✉ [start@solidarity-city-bremen.org](mailto:start@solidarity-city-bremen.org)

**Darmstadt** A currently very small initiative group for a solidary city has been formed. Practical approaches are church asylum and civil asylum. The goal is to go beyond stopping deportation with a broader focus.  
✉ [agis@nadir.org](mailto:agis@nadir.org)

**Frankfurt** The Frankfurt action alliance engages in protecting people, who have fled to Frankfurt/M. It is our goal that the political bodies sign up to stop deportation. Those who live in Frankfurt are Frankfurters.  
✉ [solidarity-city-ffm@lists.riseup.net](mailto:solidarity-city-ffm@lists.riseup.net)

**Freiburg** The „Solidarity City“-Initiative has established itself from longtime civil engagement for human rights and the right of residence. Monthly plenums and individual theme-oriented work groups want to establish a broad platform in the city that helps to fight for better living conditions for everyone.  
✉ [zuflucht@freiburger-forum.net](mailto:zuflucht@freiburger-forum.net) ♥ [freiburger-forum.net/zuflucht](http://freiburger-forum.net/zuflucht)

**Göttingen** The solidarity city of Göttingen is founded on the cooperation of MediNet, living-space initiatives, anti-racism groups and others. Derived from the support of illegalised people and the experience gained through church asylum the development of "citizen asylum" is one of its first practical initiatives.  
✉ [solidarity-city-goe@lists.riseup.net](mailto:solidarity-city-goe@lists.riseup.net)

**Hamburg** "Never mind the papers" works on a longterm project about "Urban Citizenship" and a Solidarity City Hamburg which focuses on the fields of housing, staying, education and work of all precarized people. The "Aktionskreis Hamburg Hat Platz!" demand the instant acceptance of

more shelter and asylum seekers and the immediate stop of deportations to Afghanistan. It organized a few big demonstrations and drafted the manifest "Hamburg - City of hope". The petition for accepting 1000 refugees from Greece is supported by 35 lokal organizations and supported by 5000 people. It is going to be transferred to the authorities soon.  
Sign here: ♥ <https://weact.campact.de/petitions/hamburg-hat-platz>

**Hanau** A bunch of experiences with church asylum against Dublin deportations and a current initiative for "citizen asylum" for Afghan refugees threatened by deportation are two basic practices for a concept of a solidarity city in Hanau. Apart from the fights for the right to stay we see the necessity to promote the issue of social marginalisation of different social groups.  
✉ [kmii-hanau@antira.info](mailto:kmii-hanau@antira.info)

**Hanover** An initiative for a Solidarity City exists since May 2017. Currently a network of projects is initiated that already are realising practices of a solidarity city. But we also want to react to the current political situation with its specific demands (i.e. no deportation to Afghanistan) and activities (i.e. support of the right of residence and other actions).  
✉ [solinet-hannover@lists.riseup.net](mailto:solinet-hannover@lists.riseup.net)

**Cologne** An initiative has been founded and further activities are planned.

**Leipzig** During the „Welcome 2 Stay“-action days the idea was spread that there will be a campaign for decentralised living and integration; there are groups working MediNet towards a health-card and towards stopping deportation to Afghanistan; these activities can work under the slogan of SC.

**Marburg** Solidarity City Marburg is an alliance that consists of various Marburg initiatives and individuals. We have organised ourselves midterm 2017 with the aim to make Marburg a city where people enjoy equal access to social services and a right to rights. Independent from their origin or residence permit status.  
✉ [solidarity-city-mr@riseup.net](mailto:solidarity-city-mr@riseup.net)

**Münster** The initiative “Refuge City” wants to accept people directly from the camps and is interested in a broad alliance and partnership with other cities.

**Osnabrück** Activist groups, initiatives and individuals with different views and focusses work since autumn 2016 for making Osnabrück a Solidarity City. We also highlight solidary and emancipatory structures that exist already, implement conditions and demand their official acceptance.  
✉ [kontakt@solidarity-city.eu](mailto:kontakt@solidarity-city.eu)

**Zürich** „All of us are Zürich“ asks how citizenship can be practically realised for everybody living in Zürich and among other things engages for a City-ID-Card. The Autonomous School Zürich is a self-governed school from and for people with a precarious residence permit status and a kind of asylum within the repressive migration regime of Zürich.  
♥ [wirallesindzuerich.wordpress.com](http://wirallesindzuerich.wordpress.com) ♥ [bildung-fuer-alle.ch](http://bildung-fuer-alle.ch)

## We demand:

Every person living in a city...

- shall have a right to basic provision
- shall have access to infrastructures of the city
- shall have the chance to educate themselves
- shall have medical care and counselling
- shall have a right to political participation
- shall have a right to participate culturally
- shall have the right to stay

These rights shall be granted independently from resident permit status of a person. We still say: No one is illegal!

**Illegalization of people and their exclusion is not a solution; it is the problem!**

# Network Solidarity City

For more justice  
in the city for all!



[www.solidarity-city.eu](http://www.solidarity-city.eu)

## Is your city missing?

Get active, inform yourself about networks and possibilities in your city on [solidarity-city.eu](http://solidarity-city.eu)