

**Letter
of EAPN-Greece leader Maria Marinakou
for EAPN member organizations**

Dear friends and colleagues,

As of now with an indicative 20% of the popular vote, the Greek people have voted more than 60% NO. This is a NO to austerity. It is a message of solidarity to all people of Europe who are suffering from the cuts to public goods and services, the 120 million in poverty, the unemployed and the working poor; it is a message of hope for a social and democratic Europe true to its founding values.

We voted against a proposal from the creditors based on full austerity and no debt restructuring and voted NO. It was not a vote against Europe nor against the Euro. We voted for Europe, for another Europe.

It is a vote that happened with the Greek people not having open banks, seeing the super markets empty, hearing their employers to say that if they vote for NO will be fired, in general experiencing a coercive and indoctrinated internal and external campaign based on fear that we "will be kicked" out of Europe.

Tomorrow will be a difficult day for all of us. The humanitarian crisis is deepening. The 1, 5 million unemployed, the 3 plus millions in poverty will be experiencing the same tough reality. They knew this and still they voted for hope. The hope of a debt free future, of a society that can allow them to work in decent jobs and have a pension to allow them a simple but decent life. As every person in Europe and the world. This is the message of the vote of the Greek people.

It is now the moment that our common home, Europe, should listen to this message. That the EU institutions would live up to the historical moments Europe is passing. Greece belongs to Europe. The Euro is our common currency.

We do not want to continue borrowing and continue increasing an unmanageable debt. This was the future that was given to us with the proposal that was rejected. We want for us, and every European, to have jobs, decent jobs for our youth to stay in our country and help rebuild it, to work and prosper, to reform our administration and systems that now allow the very rich become richer and send their money in off shore companies nontaxable. We cannot do that without the help of Europe, the European member states and the institutions. We cannot do this alone.

We need to rebuild our country and heal long term dysfunctions such as clientelism, corruption, tax evasion and nepotism. These dysfunctions kept poverty always on the rise even in periods of high growth, created a very unequal society with accumulation of wealth in the hands of the few. The 5 years of austerity programmes never tackled these issues, on the contrary, impoverished our country to unprecedented levels, punished the very needy by destroying public services and our weak social protection systems. In simple terms the austerity programs have destroyed our economy and teared apart our social fabric. There was no future in this trajectory. No hope.

A new chapter is starting and all united we shall struggle for a better Europe for all. We are looking to the solidarity of every European to stay firm in support of the Greek people and their struggle to build again their country within Europe on the basis of democracy, social justice, social cohesion and human rights for all.

In Bilbao we experienced your solidarity in so many forms and statements. I want to thank you from my heart for this. We need your solidarity more than ever now.

All my best wishes for your return home.

Maria Marinakou

EAPN Greece

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