

**CHANGE**

**START THE**

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LAMPEDUSA**

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# who are we?

**We** are young people with very different backgrounds, coming different cultures, having different stories and experiences.

**We** have basic knowledge of human rights and a strong desire to learn.

**We** are the young activists - we are brave and not afraid to speak up, not afraid to take initiatives; We speak up if we see an injustice.

**We** care about other people.

**We** can be a future, but we are also a present.

**We** belong to a different generation, a generation that has many opportunities and tools to express ourselves; No other generation has enjoyed that much of freedom than we do. We are concerned about the world and feel responsible for our actions.

**We** are people with strong beliefs in humanity, solidarity, independence and sustainable development.



## what we have experienced?

→ **We** came to the island with the picture of Lampedusa in our minds. This picture has changed...

**We** stayed on the island that each day people try to reach by boat - some make it, and some don't.

**We** heard what refugees go through when they arrive in Europe, here in Lampedusa. We met some of them. They survived the trip, but some of them lost their relatives and some until today do not know what happened with their children. We heard what it means to be a refugee in Europe and what it means to flee your country. Refugees are people - not numbers or figures.

**We** saw how many people, including the inhabitants of Lampedusa and organisations do their best to support refugees when they get here. We listened to a fisherman who in simple words told us that each life matters and needs to be saved but also how important it is to remember those who lost their lives when trying to get here. We understood that Lampedusa is a symbol of better future for many people who need to flee their countries.



**We** saw how life stopped here on the 3rd October in order to commemorate people who died on the sea.

**We** met many young people here coming from different parts of the world and besides language difficulties we managed to communicate, share our feelings, experiences and the work we do. We realised how important it is to work together in order to bring about change.

**We** experienced many emotions - sadness and fear, but we also felt motivated to carry on with work in our communities. We felt we were not alone - there were people around who shared our thoughts and feelings.

**We** have a feeling of being together and we want to continue the fight for a better world.

**We** were in Lampedusa - the door of Europe - and we saw how powerlessness can change into something strong and positive.

## what are the issues at stake?

**We** want to inform young people about reality in Lampedusa and complex problems in the world.

**We** want to inform about causes of migration which include poverty, inequalities, climate change, exploitation of resources and access to water, corruption and persecutions.

**We** want to inform about consequences of consumerism and materialism and structural inequality, discrimination and sexism.

**We** tackle negative feelings as fear of diversity and prejudices, overcome ignorance and stereotypes, and inform on how media and

politics can spread hate speech and fake news.

**We** want to promote values such as human rights, equality and dignity, starting from our daily relations since childhood and our abilities as human beings to be kind to one another.



## what we do and why?

→ **We** are the activists, who campaign for making the world the better place.

**We** want to learn more about what's going on, what surrounds us, we want to grow together.

**We** do it because we are angry and sad - we want to fix the damage that the adults have caused - pollution, climate change, ignorance, poverty, inequality...

**We** try to identify the privileges and unmask inequality. We work to defend the human rights, because we don't know whose rights will be challenged next. We try to improve our everyday life so that we harm the planet, others and ourselves less.

**We** embrace diversity, respect cultures and build the human-to-human connections. Solidarity - because humans work like that.

Fear is an easy emotion, labelling and ignorance is easy, coming out of the comfort zone can be difficult, but reaching out to those who need help, who are excluded - this is the real human nature. For us it's the matter of a principle to prove the stigma wrong, to break away from the illusion that the change is impossible, we dare to start the change.

## what can you do?

**You** can believe you have the power to start the change, even if it's a small step - change takes time; you can challenge yourself to meet new people.

**You** can meet refugees or migrants in your community; you can start the change with your family and friends - tell them what you know, why it matters and what they can do; you can give information to others to help them to act.

**You** can look for the truth - be curious, be critical; you can identify the injustice and work with others to find solutions.

**You** can share your experiences with others; you can arrange meetings to share stories or hear different points of view.

**You** can guide others to the facts, so you can challenge

perceptions; you can learn about human rights and inform people of theirs.

**You** can join a larger movement, if you don't know how to start; you can ask for help starting something new in your town; you can talk to younger people, make sure the next generation is aware of issues.

**You** can approach social media influencers to speak to followers, or become one; you can work with European organisations to share resources and stories.

**You** can get to know the issues locally, ask local organisations for more information and offer to help.

**You** can approach politicians, influence them, work to change attitudes, policy, opportunities and laws.