

Dear democracy and human dignity,

the freedom of the press is getting more restricted every day even in democratic countries and societies where this right is supposed to be a fundamental pillar of this governmental system.

The main reason of press restriction is the government itself: it takes advantage of its power to rule over the most influential factor of society, which is the press.

In some cases the press can be a good and fair source of information, but in other ones that's not the case: some examples of this are the channels that are owned by politicians, where the information given obviously promotes the politician himself or his party.

Sometimes politicians also buy fragments of popular channels to grow their influential power over the population.

It's also important that when the media is ruled by the government or by specific parties, the information is not only used to promote certain ideas, but also gets distorted, so it gets possible to influence people by giving selected news. A good example of this is given by the situation in some countries where journalists are attacked by the police to not let them film and show certain aspects of the truth.

Another clever use of press restriction can be seen when politicians realize that the information given by the press isn't beneficial for them. They start to restrict it by giving partial information or by telling the truth in different ways.

It's clearly important to preserve the press freedom, because if not a part of knowledge gets lost, and knowledge is the basis of democracy.

Tomas (Italy), Levente (Hungary), Eloi (Spain), Miguel (Spain)

Dear democracy and human dignity,

why is the free freedom in some countries restricted and the people can't tell their own opinion?

In some countries in Europe the government says that the people shouldn't speak their own minds because the government doesn't want the other people to have a different opinion from their own. They want all the people to have the same opinion and when people have another opinion and they speak out loud in the news they can probably be sent to prison.

The press influence the people by writing news about the government and the press doesn't always write the truth because they don't want to get punished for it. In some countries there are only a few channels and all in all they all say the same because of the restriction of the press.

The people in the countries are influenced by them. So sometimes they don't even know that there are other opinions.

Hopefully that will change soon and all people can speak their minds freely.

Julia (Netherlands), Kim (Germany), Luisa (Germany), Leonard (Romania)

Dear democracy and human dignity,

I could write a hundred pages on why refugees deserve asylum, and why the EU, as an international community, have an obligation to accommodate and integrate them. I appreciate that a lot of people on the left tend to take a very roots of the issue approach regarding this topic – I think it's important to be informed about the ongoing crisis and reasons why refugees are forced to flee. But I feel like that's where the leftist strategy stops in its tracks. The discourse does a good job of refuting anti-immigration arguments, but it's far from providing any actual solutions. That's where the right comes in, and while they do have some valid points about the difficulties and dangers that arise because of immigration, right-wing parties are ignorant of the actual cause of the crisis, instead choosing to focus solely on the effect that it has on their own country, bringing up xenophobic talking points such as the loss of national identity to third world aliens, fear-mongering people into thinking that immigrants are terrorists, rapists etc.

While I don't think that it's inherently wrong to long for and take pride in a national identity, to call oneself a German or a Romanian, I find it problematic that demagogues consolidate this idea by encouraging nationalism. People often pine to "the good old days" when the political discourse was one-sided and only benefited those already privileged by a system whose tenant was to benefit them, that is to say, to the detriment of minorities and aliens. Rightist demagogues use this irrational nostalgia, promising to retain a lost glory, to make their own country great again, enabling racism and xenophobia in general.

My message to democracy is that it needs to recover from what the political medium has devolved into, from the discourse without any actual discourse. Everyone needs to work together in order to figure out an actual solution to terrorism and the refugee crisis. I have always seen terrorism as a response to a broken system. It doesn't just materialize out of thin air. The way radicalized groups respond is always condemned, although the actual reason for the attacks is never brought up.

Leonard Sibana, Romania

Dear democracy and human dignity,

I am asking you, what is happening in Europe.

Millions of people have to flee to Europe because there are wars, poverty, starvation and limited political rights in their countries.

Hungary is becoming a blockade for the refugees.

Since the Charlie Hebdo terror attack in Paris which was in January 2015, Hungary considers immigration as a threat to the country and Europe.

In 2015 a 175 km and 4 m tall fence was built along the Hungarian-Croatian and the Hungarian-Serbian borders.

The borders are constantly under surveillance by the Army, Border Police and the Counter Terrorism Centre.

This development drastically decreased the number of refugees coming into the country and it may have made the country a safer place, but it has not helped refugees at all, in fact what happened is quite the opposite.

In my opinion the fence is not a solution to any of Europe's problems as terrorism has been present for a long time and will also be present in the future with or without the fence.

All of us should treat refugees as we want to be treated in a foreign country and give them our help and support to let them live a peaceful life.

Levente Erni, Hungary

Dear democracy and human rights,

After being created by the ancient Greeks, you have been ignored more and more by the government and powerful people.

But there are also who need you, because their human rights are being destroyed.

Their lives are in danger and the “not democracy” is closing the European doors to all the refugees.

Do you know that democracy is the human right defender, isn't it?

Nowadays, then basic pillars of democracy, Freedom, representation, equity and justice, have been blurred by the word democracy.

How should be a good democracy?

Should be a weapon that destroys the life of those fleeing away from death?

Or, a way to help people and guarantee their rights?

The answer is obviously clear, but for some people is not clear enough.

So please come back to your origins and defend the pillars that support you.

I trust I believe you can change the world again.

Eloi Mollà (Spain)

Dear democracy and human rights dignity,

Lots of people are leaving their countries because of war, religion or economic reasons.

They maybe have no home anymore, some of the refugees walked for weeks to flee from the war.

And sometimes if they finally arrived in a country where peace is, the government sends them away and don't let them stay in the country, but why?

Why don't we let them in the country?

Why don't we give them a place to sleep?

Sometimes if we do let the refugees in the country we treat them like there are differences between them and us, and yes, they are, but in a good way.

They have traveled so far just for peace and freedom.

They maybe lost their family and friends.

The only differences between us and them is their life story, their religion and maybe the colour of the skin.

But what does it matter that they look different or act differently, because everybody acts and looks different, but everybody is special in his own way.

So don't treat them like they are less than you, but treat them like you wish they would treat you if you were in the same situation. Because everybody is equal to each other.

Julia Wouda
(The Netherlands)

Dear democracy and human rights,

Nowadays you are being threatened by the actions carried out in many several countries. For example, it is inevitable to mention the refugee crisis, where a high number of people who are risking their lives along an endless journey to reach a country which is claimed to be democratic, and it is also believed not to be dangerous for them.

But actually, the reality is not like this, the reality is that when they manage to arrive there, they find the borders closed and people who are not willing to help them. After all, some of them can get access to it, but many others cannot, and they have almost no means to survive. By doing this, the only thing that countries are obtaining is a huge feeling of hatred against them. So why don't they open the borders to these people who are trying to escape from the war or another situation that is threatening their rights?

And not only this, they also help and finance the war like by selling guns and by sending troops to fight. I personally think that they could use all these resources to try and stop those conflicts. What if all the nations got united to solve some of these huge problems? By doing this, the situation would be way better than as it is nowadays.

I will finish this letter by saying that if countries continue without doing nothing in regards, those problems will become bigger and bigger until they reach a point of no return. So why not taking action now that it is not too late?

Miguel Sánchez (Spain)

Dear human rights and human dignity,

Opposition to immigration is a well-known and generally spread problem, especially in those countries that are majorly involved in the migration flow.

This attitude is mainly related to the fears people have towards migrants, that are commonly used by right wing parties to gain popularity.

One of the main fears that people have is probably linked to the economical costs the hosting of migrants will cause: these costs include medical costs but also the money needed to give a house and to help migrants that can't afford to buy what they need.

Other problems could be the environmental impact the fast population growth would cause, the slow changing of traditions that could lead to the distortion of national identity after a long time, the forming of migrants' closed communities that would lead to social instability. The decrease of life quality as a consequence of population growth and the competition for employment, along with the increase of crime, are some other major problems people are afraid of.

It's also important to note that, if people really believe in migrants being a problem for society, every ethical policy about this subject won't receive democratic support, whereas most of the policies that would receive democratic support won't be ethical. This is strictly related to the fact that a lot of politicians have been showing the migration as a huge problem for political stability and society, encouraging the population to think that way. The opposition to immigration is not only related to countries though, but also to a wider society aspect, and it's not strictly linked to right wing parties, but to narrow-minded people in general.

Some countries, though, are trying to take advantage of the situation while helping migrants, instead of closing their borders. These countries are mainly the ones with an older population, in need of new young workers.

A lot of people probably think that all immigrants are low-skilled people that would only be a problem for the country, but they don't realize that they can bring some benefits and that they are human beings just like us, and they need help.

However, keeping the borders completely open is probably not a solution, but keeping them closed isn't a solution either. The only possible solution is probably to try and solve the problems at their origin.

Thomas Bellavere (Italy)