

## VareseNews

### Wear yellow, to say “no” to the racism

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**T-shirts, scarves, banners hanging from a window: what is important is that they are yellow.** Associations in Varese are giving a message to the whole of Lombardy and Italy; their message is one of anti-racism, supporting harmony and integration. The associations are promoting the campaign “**Dress in yellow**”, which aims to make the protest visible on 10 December, the sixty first anniversary of the “Universal Declaration on human rights”. This campaign, which was started in Varese by the local associations, has now become national.

“The initiative was created by a group of associations, trade unions, and individuals, who, for two years, have been working against racism, and for integration”, explains Filippo **Cardaci, from the Italian Christian workers’ society, ACLI, in Varese.** The organizers emphasise that the initiative started from the bottom, and it is not by chance that it started in Varese, the “cradle” of the Northern League, at the centre of an area that, even recently, has seen several protests against foreigners. “It’s a policy that invents excuses every day in order to continue to exist,” complains Jacques Amani, the Varese CGIL union official responsible for immigration.

“We want to launch a positive message with this campaign, one of fraternity and solidarity between all human beings,” Cardaci continues. **These values have been put to the test in these times of economic crisis**, which not only put Italians against foreigners, but which also creates competition and reciprocal hostility between different parts of society. We need only think of the disputes between public and private employees, or between workers in Italy and the border-workers, as reported also by Varesenews. This too is the reason for the trade union participation. “The crisis is hitting hard in Lombardy and around Varese, and the first to be affected are the foreigners. The proposal to limit redundancy benefit for foreigners to only six months, is an example of institutional racism, and this is more serious than the racism of ordinary people,” reminds Fulvia Colombini, the regional representative of the CGIL. **Lorenzo Todeschini**, of the trade union CISL and the employee association ANOLF Lombardy, invites everyone to look ahead, to face the topic of immigration as a structural fact that we will have to examine.

The ACLI (Italian Workers Christian Associations) and UISP (Italian Sport for Everyone Associations) have also joined the initiative: “Yellow day,” explains Antonio Russo, national ACLI head of immigration, “is also going to relaunch the *Don’t be*

*afraid* campaign, which has been promoted by many associations, and which has collected 80 thousand signatures in one year. The image we have today of immigration is profoundly wrong; there are people who exploit the fears of others to increase hostility against foreigners. That's why we have to change the language of politics in order to combat racism. And that's why we have to take these topics to the parishes, clubs and workplaces.”

**On the designated day, the people that adhere to the campaign can make their position visible by wearing any yellow item of clothing, or by putting a piece of yellow cloth on their bicycle, car or balcony.** The Varese associations that adhere will display yellow banners at their windows. “We then invite you to send us photos by e-mail or by MMS,” explains Alessandra Pessina of UISP, in Varese. “We are also going to organise theatre and art performances and other events; anyone can organise a stand in his town.” In Varese, the initiative will probably be hosted in Piazza Podestà, in the heart of the city centre. Other events will be publicised on the campaign's website.

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