

# VareseNews

## “Dear Mayor, help us to welcome them”

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**One, two families, groups of ten people, managed by the Council, to be accommodated and helped.**

In an open letter to their colleagues, Silvio Aimetti and Fabio Passera, the Mayors of Comerio and Maccagno con Pine e Vedas, respectively, have asked for a concrete response to administrators on the topic of immigration. And they have done so as spokespersons for the “Civic network for immigration, of the mayors of Varese Province”.

“As you will know, in the last few years, and particularly since 2015, our country has been a destination, in some cases, a stopover, for thousands of people from countries where war, famine and persecution have forced them to seek a better life elsewhere,” the two mayors wrote. “We have witnessed tragic scenes, and the arrival of thousands of people on our shores; our initial reception facilities have been put to a hard test in recent years; but we must say that they have consistently demonstrated their great ability to welcome, which is innate in our people. Finally, with numerous and heartfelt appeals, the Pope has invited all of us to build bridges, not walls, and for us Italians, this has a special meaning, because it reminds us of the very roots of our history, so deeply founded on the Christian concept of welcoming the last.”

“Over these months, we’ve been asked a number of times, by the appropriate authorities, first of all, the

Prefecture, to play our part by promoting reception projects in our municipalities. In Varese Province, there are currently about 1700 asylum seekers being accommodated, in a little more than 40 municipalities; this has meant, and indeed means, that some councils, including small ones, are managing a significant number of people in their areas, who, albeit only in theory, might not help to achieve optimal management of the project, either for economic speculations or, above all, for a successful integration of these people into the social fabric of our towns.”

**“And it is also for these reasons that we have decided to create a network that will enable the various councils involved in projects to exchange opinions, materials and good management practices,”** the Mayors said. “To this day, we’ve been checking the quality of this decision to exchange and share, and we would also like to ask to you to set up a reception project based on a number of characteristics that we believe will guarantee its success. We are convinced that the small size of the group of refugees (about 10) and the adherence to an S.P.R.A.R. project, with direct management by the council, will ensure the achievement of several positive goals for our communities.

“For example, the setting up of projects that will help the community (the cleaning of streets and other municipal property, services to the citizens), the non-management, in terms of economic profit, by the relevant organisations (cooperatives, etc.), the possibility of creating a more direct and personal relationship with these people.

“So, we remain at your complete disposal, to support your decision to set up a reception project. On this matter, we remind you that, as part of the Civic Network, we have a number of town councillors available, who are experts on immigration, who may be consulted on administrative or legal matters,” the appeal concludes.

di Translated by Bettoni & Reseli (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)