



Respect and Courage – Düsseldorf Declaration on Unity in Diversity

Understanding and responsibility – cohesion and confidence

Respect and Courage is a politically independent, voluntary alliance whose mission is to shape intercultural understanding in Düsseldorf. We illustrate the opportunities offered by our diverse society on the basis of a culture of recognition, without concealing the related problems.

This declaration by the more than 60 organisations, associations and clubs affiliated to “Respect and Courage” is an expression of its social identity and the basis for its actions. The declaration also wishes to provide answers to the anti-democratic, authoritarian challenges of our times.

The world, Europe and therefore our country are faced with major challenges: climate change, wars all over the world, refugee movements, increasing social division and populist, nationalistic forces that exploit these problems for their political agenda.

Aggressive, divisive political movements are also active in Germany. The country appears nervous, parts of the population are unsettled, fear the erosion of cultural connections and are looking for outer and inner security.

Extreme right-wing parties and movements are attempting to shift the limits of what can be said ever closer towards a racist agenda, and to mobilise people against social minorities. They are forming with the aim of changing our democratic and liberal-minded social order into their anti-liberal, folkish opposite.

We therefore consider the following views to be fundamental for the peaceful coexistence of people in a democratic and tolerant society.

- We understand diversity as constitutive for humanity, for people’s pursuit of happiness, recognition and community spirit. It is the unity of the diverse that holds our city and our country together on the inside and in everyday life.
- We are of the opinion that isolation, folkish views of the world and the rejection of the ideals of enlightenment contradict mankind as a social and rational being.
- We advocate democracy, tolerance and universal human rights. We unequivocally reject contempt for democracy, authoritarianism and nationalism as well as all forms of discrimination, racism and religious fundamentalism.
- We reject all manifestations of right-wing extremism in our migrant society, i.e. including anti-democratic, extremist ideologies of demographic groups of differing ethnic origin.

- We campaign explicitly in everyday life against all forms of antisemitism, and advocate a culture of remembrance of the crimes of national socialism. Remembering means feeling a sense of solidarity with our Jewish fellow citizens, and thus also accepting responsibility for the present and the future of our democratic society. This expressly also includes all other groups of victims of national socialism.
- We are of the opinion that a unifying collection of values for all residents of this country, such as democracy and constitutional rules, freedom and social belonging, security and liberal-mindedness, is necessary for the peaceful coexistence of all.
- We broker meetings, endeavour to understand and contribute towards differentiation and enlightenment, because our democratic and liberally-minded approach is dialogue-oriented, open to experimentation and respectful of opinions.

The organisers and cooperation partners of the “Düsseldorf Articles – Respect and Courage”
www.respekt-und-mut.de

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