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[Press release](#) | 11.03.2025

Commission proposal panders to populism over responsible & pragmatic migration policies

Migration

Today, the European Commission has just [released](#) its proposal for a new regulation moving towards a common system for the processing of 'returns' or deportations of migrants to third countries. The reforms move from voluntary to forced deportations by default, open the door to so-called "return hubs" in third-countries and risks undermining the EU's responsibility to uphold human rights standards in the return process. The Greens/EFA Group have long argued for a more safe, dignified and effective EU asylum and migration system based on evidence-based policies.

Tineke Strik MEP, Greens/EFA Rapporteur on the Recast Returns Directive and Member of the LIBE Committee, comments:

"Instead of working towards a safe, fair and efficient return system, the Commission is willing to throw human rights and evidence-based policy making to the wind in favour of pandering to populists. Echoing the failed UK-Rwanda deal, Member States will be able to deport people to countries where they have an agreement, regardless of whether the people involved have any links to that country or whether they will ultimately be able to return to their home country."

"This will open the door to 'return hubs' in third-countries, which will inevitably lead to prolonged detention and pose very real practical and legal risks when it comes to upholding fundamental rights under other countries' judicial systems. Return hubs shift the responsibility for taking care of people needing to return from the EU to third countries and distracts from addressing the real challenges, including the need to work on efficient return procedures and to invest in effective cooperation with countries of origin."

"The proposed regulation moves from prioritising voluntary returns, which we know are more humane, efficient and sustainable, to forced deportations by default. The conditions for detaining people will be expanded, locking up thousands more people for longer periods with limited options to contest their detention. This proposal has a misguided focus on security, which won't address genuine security risks and instead will mean people are indefinitely detained or forcibly removed, for vague and ill defined reasons."

"The Commission's new approach takes a punitive approach to return. The proposed regulation sets out a long list of unreasonable expectations for returnees and unnecessarily harsh consequences if they fail to meet

these; such as the denial of benefits, seizure of documents or financial penalties. The proposed regulation will undermine the EU's obligations and its ability to uphold human rights standards. It will not lead to more effective returns, but rather lead to people ending up in a limbo, vulnerable to attempts to enter the EU again."

More:

The new proposal on 'returns' replaces the 2008 Return Directive (and the 2018 recast proposal).

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Responsible MEPs



Tineke Strik

Member

Contact person



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

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