



### JRS Europe raises again the alarm about the Returns Regulation

We are appalled to see EU asylum and migration law-making continue on its downward trajectory, the latest manifestation of this trend being the recent adoption of the ‘Returns’ Regulation by the EU legislators. JRS Europe denounced the law and the relevant political dynamics, from the initial legislative stage and text until right before its final adoption on 17 June 2026. We call on the Member States not to rush implementing harmful provisions to the detriment of people being in a vulnerable position. We also invite the European Commission to monitor closely the practices used by the Member States when deporting refugees and other migrants.

We are wondering, with dread and concern...

...Since when should people be deprived of their inherent human dignity by being deported, based on their migration status, to centers outside the EU where their case would be processed? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow.

...Since when should people of any age, including children, be detained for more than two years -with possibility of indefinite detention periods if at least two member states apply detention in a consecutive way- due to migration-related reasons? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow.

...Since when can domestic harmony and right to private and family life be violated by the state authorities to perform ‘investigative measures’ to ensure deportation? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow.

...Since when enforcement should prevail over solidarity and hospitality towards the other by forcing deportation instead of truly prioritising more sustainable solutions, such as the voluntary return pathway? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow.

...Since when is irrationality being presented as normal, when, for example, complying with a legal obligation to cooperate is, in some cases, impossible for a person or remains at the discretion of the state authority to assess if this happened, especially given the uneven power dynamics between the state and the person within a certain migration reality, or, even so, administrative irregularity? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow.

We are wondering since when it is really expected that applying physical as well as institutional violence and coercion to people can lead to social cohesion? Because this is what the EU just agreed to allow. And this is what we think that the Pact will also contribute to, following its entry into force a few days ago.



As JRS Europe, we fight to change the paradigm, to contribute to social cohesion by welcoming Humans and not by agreeing to send them where they would be ‘out of sight, out of mind’, hence we denounce the so-called Return Regulation.

The Returns Regulation will contribute to the suffering of individuals and will lead most probably to breach of international refugee law, since it will not be possible to adequately assess the principle of *non-refoulement* due to fast-track deportation procedures, either to countries of origin where the person would indeed face danger or uncertainty – despite not being able to obtain asylum status- or to third countries where the specifics regarding the application of EU law and the deployment of EU agencies’ staff are not yet clear to anybody.

We feel ashamed of having witnessed the cheering in the European Parliament of conservative political forces, in light of the misery of vulnerable human beings. “*Send them back*” a number of MEPs shouted. And their facial expression confirmed their satisfaction. We consider this inhumane and unacceptable.

Notwithstanding the legally and morally questionable practice of externalisation, including through strict deportation-focused measures, Pope Leo reminded to us upon his Apostolic Journey to Spain that *"the moral greatness of a nation is manifested, above all, in its capacity to accompany, protect and love those lives that are most fragile"*.

JRS Europe commits to keep accompanying refugees, forcibly displaced people and others, even throughout their voluntary return path or deportation case, whenever and wherever we have the means to do so. This is what our mandate against immigration detention and in favor of social inclusion, among others, dictates us to do so. Through our work on the field of 23 countries around Europe continent and being there with and for people, our hospitality is embodied and finds practical expression.

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