Asylum and Immigration Board publishes findings following a monitoring mission to Albania

The Asylum and Immigration Board (*Tavolo Immigrazione e Asilo, TAI*) - in collaboration with the Parliamentary Contact Group, composed of members of the Chamber of Deputies, the Senate and the European Parliament - conducted a monitoring mission to the Gjader detention facility in Albania. The centre was established by the Italian government under the Italy–Albania Protocol and is used to hold individuals transferred from Italian repatriation detention centres (CPRs) pending repatriation. The group also took part in the mission as part of a broader series of initiatives linked to the discussion of the 2026 Budget Law.

The mission, including parliamentarians Matteo Orfini, Rachele Scarpa and Riccardo Magi, took place in the context of ongoing legal developments. In Order No 23105/2025, the Court of Cassation submitted a preliminary reference to the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU), requesting clarification on the compatibility of the Italy–Albania Protocol with the EU Return Directive (2008/115/EC). The court raised questions about whether detention carried out in a non-EU third country complies with the safeguards and limits established under European law concerning the deprivation of liberty.

During the visit, TAI provided updated operational information: transfers from Italy have continued since August 2025 at approximately biweekly intervals, increasing to weekly frequency since October 2025. The most recently assigned identification number is reported to be 219. At the time of the visit, 25 individuals were present in the facility, with an average occupancy of around 20 and a recorded minimum of 12.

TAI expressed concerns regarding the proportionality and efficiency of maintaining a facility with limited occupancy in relation to the public resources involved, as well as the implications for the individuals detained. Approximately 70% of detainees were returned to Italy following non-validation of detention, while others were assessed as not eligible for repatriation or were subject to repatriation procedures ordered by Italy. According to TAI, these outcomes raise legal questions about the application of detention measures in light of the EU Return Directive and relevant case law.

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Additional issues highlighted by TAI concern transparency in transfer procedures. Recent transfers occurred by air from Turin without independent observation, while returns to Italy continue by sea during nighttime hours. TAI stated that these practices limit opportunities for external monitoring.

The detainee population reportedly includes individuals from Algeria, Morocco, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, as well as one Syrian and one South American national. TAI noted that some detainees receive psychotropic medication and called for clarification about the healthcare arrangements and safeguards within the facility.

Based on its observations, TAI considered that the monitoring mission points to structural and operational challenges, which are linked to the broader legal questions currently under examination by the CJEU.

Following the visit, the Asylum and Immigration Board and participating parliamentarians called on the Italian government to suspend transfers to Gjader pending legal clarification, improve transparency on detention procedures and associated costs, and reassess the Italy–Albania Protocol. In a joint statement, TAI representatives said the mission reinforced their view that current arrangements warrant urgent review to ensure alignment with European legal standards and the protection of fundamental rights.

Source(s)

- Italian Council for Refugees | Consiglio Italiano per i Rifugiati (29 October, 2025), Missione di monitoraggio del TAI in Albania: il centro di Gjader conferma criticità strutturali, violazioni dei diritti umani e spreco di risorse pubbliche [TAI Mointoring mission in Albania: Gjader centre confirms structural issues, human rights violation and waste of public resources], https://cir-rifugiati.org/2025/10/29/missione-di-monitoraggio-del-tai-in-albania-il-centro-di-gjader-conferma-criticita-strutturali-violazioni-dei-diritti-umani-e-spreco-di-risorse-pubbliche/

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