Civil society criticise Ministry's circular to increase capacity in CPRs and delay medical screening

Several civil society organisations and healthcare experts raised concerns about the Ministry of the Interior's circular dated 20 January 2026. The directive, which seeks to expand the capacity of Permanence Centres for Repatriation (CPR) and expedite expulsions, includes provisions to delay medical screening until after an individual has entered the facility. At the same time, the circular calls for protocols with Addiction Services (SerDs) to facilitate the detention of drug addicts. Civil society organisations and healthcare experts argued that this shift poses a significant risk to public health and professional medical ethics based on the following points:

- Critics maintain that medical examinations are a fundamental preventive measure rather than a procedural hurdle. They argue that suitability must be assessed prior to entry to identify psychiatric conditions or infectious diseases that are exacerbated by detention. Delaying these checks is seen as a move that exposes both detainees and staff to risks such as infectious outbreaks, self-harm, or suicide.
- There is a growing consensus among professional bodies that doctors must prioritise the Code of Medical Ethics and Article 32 of the Constitution over administrative circulars. Observers note that performing screenings after detention compromises a physician’s independence and forces them to waive unacceptable health risks for their patients.
- Legal analysts point out that the circular may conflict with 2025 Council of State jurisprudence, which previously annulled CPR tender specifications due to inadequate healthcare and suicide prevention standards. Weakening these checks is viewed as a direct contradiction of that ruling.

Experts argued that CPRs lack the clinical infrastructure required to manage substance use disorders (SUDs) according to DSM-5 criteria, making these facilities unsuitable for therapeutic care.

Source(s)

- Association for Juridical Studies on Immigration | Associazione per gli Studi Giuridici sull'Immigrazione (5 February, 2026), La salute non è una variabile

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