Statements by civil society on the European Commission's proposed Common European System for Returns

On 11 March 2025, the European Commission presented its proposal for new regulations to accelerate the expulsion of migrants to any third country with which an agreement exists (Common European System for Returns).

This proposal is aligned with the border control and externalisation approach of the European Pact on Migration and Asylum, approved in April 2024. Numerous voices from civil society organisations have been warning that, with these measures, the EU is further distancing itself from its founding values of solidarity, respect for human rights, and the dignity of all people, regardless of their origin and provenance.

Civil society organisations urged the European Parliament and Member States to:

1. Move towards a migration policy based on the EU's founding values: dignity, solidarity, and respect for human rights.
2. Reject the creation of deportation centres in third countries, which jeopardise the principle of non-refoulement, can lead to arbitrary and prolonged detention far from Europe, and pose a serious threat to the rights of migrants.
3. Ensure that any return measures adopted fully respect fundamental rights and the right to asylum, avoiding detention and seeking alternatives to detention and coercive measures in cooperation with the authorities.
4. Ensure access to effective legal assistance throughout the return process, applying the automatic suspensive effect of appeals and guaranteeing the protection of vulnerable individuals.

Source(s)

- Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid | Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado (18 March, 2025), La propuesta de la Comisión Europea de acelerar las expulsiones a terceros países es ilegal e inhumana [The European Commission's proposal to speed up expulsions to third countries is illegal and inhumane], https://www.cear.es/noticias/ilegal-propuesta-expulsiones-terceros-paises/

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