SEM announces the closure of the special asylum center in Les Verrières

The State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) announced that the special asylum center in Les Verrières (Neuchâtel canton) will be closed in the near future, following the commune's unilateral decision in May 2025 to terminate its agreement on the center's operation. Although no exact closure date has been set, the SEM will first hold consultations with the cantons to determine the next steps.

The commune justified its decision by citing repeated property damage and inappropriate behavior from some residents of the center, asylum seekers deemed particularly uncooperative. The municipal council also criticized the fact that a second special center planned for the German-speaking part of Switzerland has not yet been established.

The SEM and the commune agreed on the principle of closure during a recent meeting, and the SEM will now discuss alternative approaches with the cantons for managing and accommodating uncooperative or delinquent asylum seekers. The Task Force on Repeat Offenders in the Asylum and Foreign Nationals System, launched on June 16, 2025, will also contribute to shaping future measures.

Opened in December 2018, the Les Verrières center housed between five and ten asylum seekers at a time, transferred there temporarily from regular federal asylum centers due to behavioral issues. Insights from the ongoing discussions will feed into the broader national asylum strategy currently under development.

Source(s)

- State Secretariat for Migration | Staatssekretariat für Migration | Secrétariat d'État aux migrations | Segreteria di Stato della migrazione (27 June, 2025), Fermeture du centre spécifique des Verrières – le SEM étudie d'autres solutions avec les cantons [Closure of the specific centre in Les Verrières – the SEM is studying other solutions with the cantons], https://www.news.admin.ch/fr/newnsb/qANsgVfJ5sYypmYpe3X-5

Date of development
27.06.2025
Country
Switzerland

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Document generated on 30-10-2026
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Thematic area(s)
Reception, Accommodation
Development type
Practice

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