

VOLT MEPs INSPECT ITALIAN DETENTION CENTRES IN ALBANIA

Volt Europa's European Members of Parliament visit to inspect the new migrant detention centres built by the Italian Government in Albania.

On **Friday 22nd November the Volt MEPs¹ Damian Boeslager, Anna Strolenberg, Reinier Van Lanschot and Kai Tegethoff will enter the repatriation hub in Gjadër**, recently inaugurated by the Meloni Government, officially opening a worrying strategy of externalisation of European borders to migrants.

Migration policy is a European matter, not a national one, as Meloni's Government acts upon, this is why Volt Europa's MEPs will inspect the detention centres.

On behalf of Volt Europa, especially on behalf of its chapters in Italy and Albania, we condemn both centres in Gjadër and Shëngjin because:

- They are in open conflict with European Law, as stated by the European Court of Justice² on 4th October 2024 who deemed illegal the definition of "**secure countries**", through which the migrants would be sent back to, against human rights;
- The Italian Government issued a new Law³ to bypass the European tender directive by assigning the allocation of funding, 10 million euro, directly to construction companies without any verification through **public tender**;
- The **transparency** of the funding schemes that are not publicly available. Budget is foreseen for 1 billion euro for 5 years, after which the Italy-Albania agreement ends, the source presumably being Italian funds and not European.
- Finally, Volt believes that the public resources could have been spent to **invest on the integration of migrants and for developing better public services** for the population. Whilst the Government builds the centres in Albania, Italy only spends 65% of Amif funds for migrant inclusion, showing that the inclusion efforts are extremely limited.

Through this visit, Volt in Italy and Albania condemn this agreement between Prime Ministers Meloni and Rama, as part of the broader **opposition that Volt Europa is carrying out on migration policies in Europe**, that are against human rights and a socially inclusive cultural and economic development of Europe.

¹ About Volt Members of European Parliament:

<https://volteuropa.org/news/volt-gets-5-pan-european-meps-elected>

² Judgement of the Court in Case C-406/22:

<https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2024-10/cp240162en.pdf>

³ Italian Law n. 14 del 21.2.2024. Art. 3, comma 7:

<https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:2024;14>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ITALIAN MIGRANT DETENTION CENTRES IN ALBANIA

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama signed a five-year deal in November 2023 concerning cooperation between the two countries when it came to asylum seekers in Italy.

Albania agreed to detain up to three thousand migrants rescued from international waters each month while Italy processes their asylum claims.

Asylum requests are expected to take around a month to process –with Albania potentially receiving up to 36,000 asylum seekers each year.

Two centres have been built:

- in **Gjadër**, a former military airport located 80km away from the Albanian capital city of Tirana, which is composed of two parts:
 - Reception centre sized for 880 migrants;
 - Centre of Permanence for Repatriation (CPR) sized for 144 migrants;
 - Availability of 168 places for service accommodation, 60 of which are reserved for the staff of the managing institution, the remaining places will be used by the staff of the other institutions operating within the Centre.
- in **Shengjin**, where housing units and offices are set in an area covering 4,000 square metres and surrounded by a 5-metre-high barbed metal fence:
 - Sized reception, without overnight stay, of migrants brought to port and for the time strictly necessary - for health screening procedures, identification and collection of any asylum applications, after which the migrants will be transferred to the facilities in Gjadër;

On 4th October 2024 the **European Court of Justice** deemed illegal the definition of "secure countries", through which the migrants would be sent back to, against human rights.

Based on this, the **Rome court's immigration section** ruled that 12 male migrants held in Albania who originally come from Bangladesh and Egypt, have the right to be taken to Italy due to the impossibility of recognising the states of origin of the detained persons as 'safe countries', and were therefore shipped back to Italy.

This has brought **accusations by the government against the judiciary** over immigration policies, of overstepping their role.

As a result, the **Italian Government approved a new decree aimed at redefining the list of safe countries for migrants**. In this new decree, the list of safe countries has been reduced from 22 to 19, removing Cameroon, Colombia, and Nigeria, it aims to expedite asylum procedures and align with upcoming European regulations and the government asserts that it has the authority to define safe countries, countering judicial interpretations.

LEGAL BACKGROUND FOR MEPs VISIT TO ITALIAN MIGRANT REMPATRIATION CENTRES

According to Italian legislation, members of the Italian and European Parliament can enter prisons for inspection purposes.

Article 67, letter L ter

<https://www.brocardi.it/legge-ordinamento-penitenziario/titolo-ii/capo-i/art67.html>

According to Italian legislation prisons and detention centers for migrant (CPR) have been equipped, ensuring the visits for inspection purposes, according to the Minniti Law.

Law 46/17 art 19

<https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:legge:2017-04-13;46>

This means that it would be possible for Members of Italian and European Parliament to visit the migrant detention centres.

As the ones in Albania are extra territorial, it is possible to visit them too.

LOGISTICS FOR THE VISIT

Departure from Tirana on Friday 22nd November early morning by bus.

Arrival in Gjadër at 10 o'clock

MEPs and small delegation will enter (4 meps and 4 extra people from Volt)

Rest of people will remain outside (approx 10 people)

Italian authorities have been informed (DAP - Prison Dept and Italian Embassy in Albania)

Albanian authorities have been informed (national police)

Gjadër location: Coordinate GPS (WGS84) Lat. N 41.873326, Long. E 19.595489