

On the Move – Latest migration news

MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CYPRUS

08/06/2021 – 21/06/2021

- 5 UN Special Rapporteurs [express](#) their concern about NGOs in Cyprus and KISA's deregistration.

26/05/2021 – 7/06/2021

- On 3 June 2021, six NGOs (ALEF, Access Centre for Human Rights, KISA, the Lebanese Centre for Human Rights and EuroMed Rights) issued a [joint statement](#) denouncing that at least five Syrians who were pushed back from Cyprus to Lebanon on 16 May 2021, were deported from Lebanon to Syria on 1 June 2021 and others are still in detention and at risk of deportation.
- On 3 June 2021, the Director-General of Lebanese General Security, Abbas Ibrahim, [met with](#) Cypriot Interior Minister, Nikos Nouris, and police chief, Stelios Papatheodorou, on the [issue](#) of “illegal immigration to Cyprus and how to deal with this phenomenon in the best and most effective way possible.”
- 34 men, 20 women and 48 children on board a boat [waited](#) for five days off Cypriot coasts before being allowed to disembark. On 21 May 2021, Cyprus had notified the European Commission of its “[state of emergency](#)” concerning migration control and that “there is no further capacity to host additional migrants”.

10/05/2021 – 26/05/2021

- On 16 May 2021, a [boat](#) with 56 migrants on board (39 men, seven women and ten children) was reportedly spotted about 16 nautical miles south of Cyprus' Cape Greco. Cypriot authorities checked the documents of the people on board and then denied entry to Cyprus and pushed them back to Lebanon.

29.03.2021 – 12.04.2021

- The US Department of State [published](#) its *2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* on Cyprus, highlighting the recent pushbacks practices.

10/03/2021 – 29/03/2021

- On 18 March 2021, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatović, [urged](#) Cypriot authorities to “investigate allegations of pushbacks and ill-treatment of migrants, improve reception conditions, and ensure an enabling environment for NGOs”.
- The government of Cyprus has started [erecting](#) an 11km-long barrier to prevent migrants from crossing from the Northern part of the island to the South.

23/02/2021 – 10/03/2021

- On 19 February 2021, in an official statement, Cyprus [called for](#) international assistance to deal with what it called the “migration crisis”.

08/02/2021 – 22/02/2021

- On 19 February 2021, 37 organisations [denounced](#) the ongoing harassment against KISA and called on the Cypriot authorities to reinstate their official registration as a non-governmental organisation (NGO). In a joint declaration, the Cypriot Foreign Affairs and Interior Ministers [accused](#) Turkey of creating a new migration route that has “disproportionately affected” Cyprus, that now has the highest percentage of asylum seekers in the European Union in relation to its population. The Ministers requested discussing this issue at the upcoming videoconference of EU Foreign Affairs and Interior Ministers on 15 March 2021.

21/12 2020 – 8/2 2021

- Read EuroMed Right’s [submission](#) to the Special Rapporteur’s Report on Pushback Practices and Their Impact on the Human Rights of Migrants
- Asylum seekers detained in the Pournara camp [protested](#) against the inhumane detention conditions and over delays in their asylum application process.

12/1 2021–25/1 2021

- Asylum seekers detained in the Pournara “reception” centre [protested](#) for freedom and to denounce the inhumane detention conditions in which they live.
- Cypriot Interior Minister published a [decree](#) banning newly arrived Syrian refugees in Cyprus to settle in the coastal village of Chlorakas, accusing

them of causing demographic and criminality problems and of “creating ghettos”.

21/12 2020 –12/1 2021

- On 8 January 2021, around 25 people onboard a boat [were reportedly pushed back](#) from Cyprus to Turkey.
- A [report produced](#) by the Ombudswoman, Maria Stylianos-Lottides, with the UCLan Cyprus University, revealed the extremely worrying conditions of migrant domestic workers in Cyprus. Among the alarming findings: domestic workers work 40% more hours than their employment contract states; and “about 75 per cent of them said they would not report their employer to the police if they were victims of physical abuse”

21/12 2020

- EuroMed Rights’ member KISA [denounces](#) the continuous acts of repression by the Cypriot government and its Minister of Interior, who “proceeded on 14.12.2020 to remove KISA from the Register of Associations and declared KISA’s actions as illegal” in a violent criminalisation and defamation attempt.

28/09 – 09/10 2020

- **Cyprus and Lebanon** are concluding an [agreement](#) which will allow to “swiftly turn away boats proven to have left Lebanon and send them back to where they have departed from”, thus legitimising pushbacks and collective expulsions in violation of the principle of *non-refoulement* and of EU and international conventions. An increased support from the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex, is also foreseen. Migrants report cases of violence, threats and beating from the “Greek Cypriot marine police officers”. [Human Right Watch](#) published a report on pushbacks from Cyprus to Lebanon.