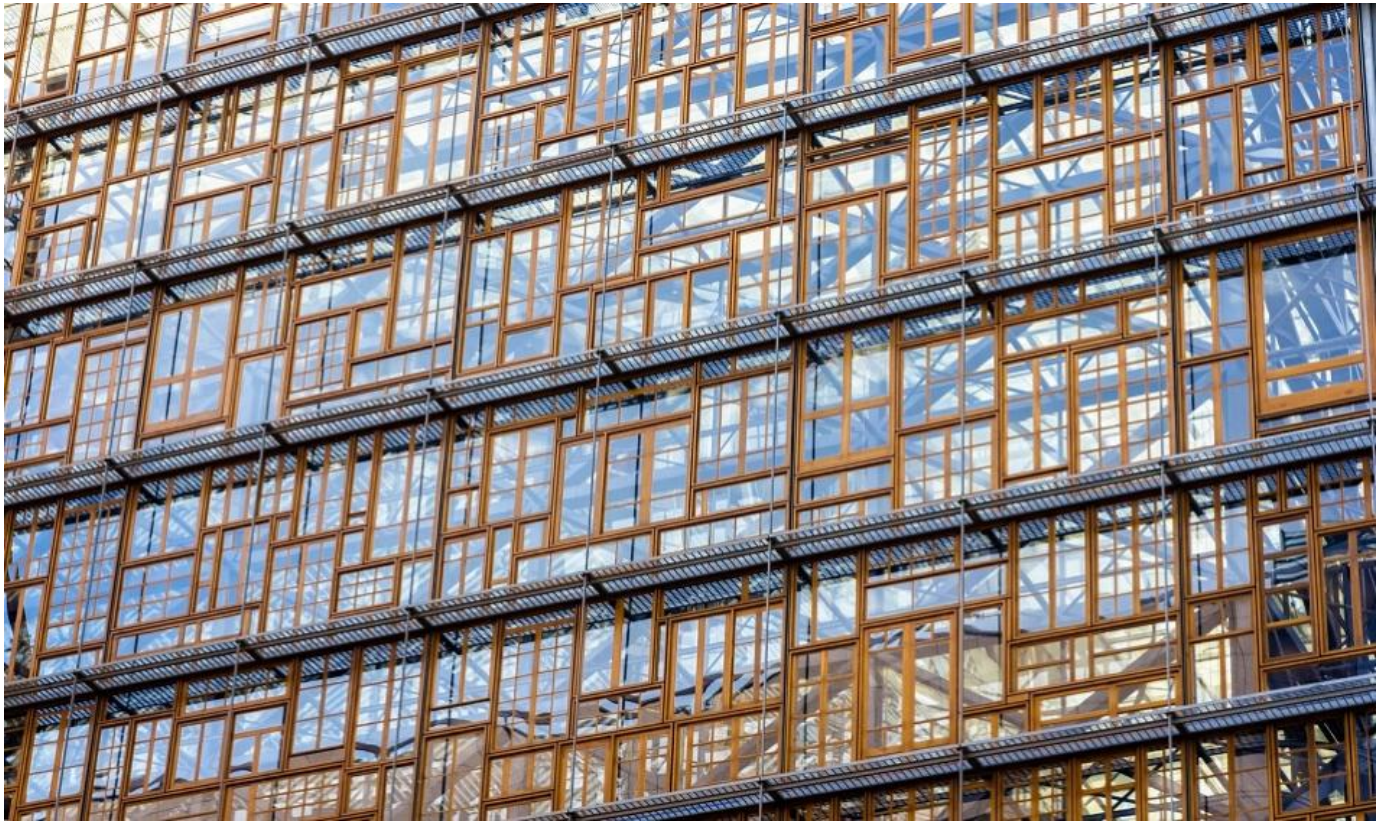


EPSU reiterates warnings against controlled centres and disembarkation platforms for migrants and asylum-seekers



(13 December 2018) Ahead of the European Council on 13-14 December, EPSU urges the Council to refocus on the solidarity elements of the migration package, including a reform of the dysfunctional Dublin Rules. A common EU asylum policy must be based on solidarity between member states.

EPSU is very concerned about the Austrian Presidency's plans to "rapidly conclude negotiations" on the newly branded Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) Regulation, on the Asylum Agency (EASO) Regulation and on the Return Directive. We expressed strong doubts regarding the feasibility and legality of these proposals in a briefing [here](#).

The Austrian Presidency's stated objective is to implement the Council's conclusions of June 2018, which provide for legally shaky and morally dubious concepts of

“controlled centres” and “disembarkation platforms” for rescued migrants and asylum-seekers, as explained in an EPSU briefing [here](#). We warned against the plans to keep refuge-seekers outside Europe through measures which violate international and European asylum and human rights law.

EPSU warns against rushing through such important proposals which will result in (possibly) illegal push-backs of migrants and asylum-seekers, fast-tracking of asylum-applications and rapid returns, all of which risk to violate the non-refoulement principle. The role of Frontex and EASO in the hotspots in Greece has been under severe criticisms. An evaluation is required before injecting more money in both agencies.

EPSU highlights that contrary to the anti-migrant narrative by populist right-wing groups, solidarity does exist in the EU. On 6 November 2018, EPSU established a European network of workers involved in the reception of migrants and refugees (see [here](#)). These workers oppose the anti-migrant politics and argue for a public service of “hospitality” that respects the dignity of the migrant person and of workers. Unions representing maritime workers are also getting organized to uphold the international obligation to rescue people in distress (see [here](#)).

Sadly, the Austrian government was not in Marrakech on 10-11 December to sign the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, even though the latter only reaffirms migrant workers’ existing rights. Instead, as holder of the EU presidency in Brussels, it is busy with establishing a common asylum policy based upon no or very carefully selected asylum-seekers.

The Council praises the sharp drop in the number of arrivals in the EU this year as a result of what is seen as good EU external migration policies. These are based on border control and cooperation with countries of origin and transit, which are likely to be modelled upon infamous bilateral deals struck with Turkey or Libya. Through these deals the EU aims to deter migrants and refugees from accessing Europe in exchange for money and support of border guards in states with a record of human rights violations.

Meanwhile, Mare nostrum continues to turn into Mare Monstrum.

- [Log in](#) to post comments

- [Printer-friendly version](#)

Policies

[Migration](#)