

Scirocco - Latest news from Italy

[07.05.2026: The Italy-Albania deal: "Compatible with EU law" — but at what cost?](#)

The Italy–Albania protocol on migration “is compatible with EU legislation” only insofar as migrants’ rights are “fully protected.” This is the conclusion of [Advocate General Nicholas Emiliou](#) at the European Court of Justice. But what does “compatible with EU law” mean in practice—and at what cost? Emiliou suggests that, “in principle,” both the protocol and the relevant Italian legislation could be considered compatible with EU law, particularly the Return Directive and the Asylum Procedures Directive.

[The ECJ](#) had already examined the case in August last year, following a referral from the Court of Rome, which has repeatedly questioned the legality of detaining migrants rescued in the Mediterranean and transferred to Albania on the basis that they come from countries Italy deems “safe,” such as Egypt and Bangladesh. A final ruling is still pending, but the Advocate General’s opinion may significantly influence the outcome.

This makes it crucial to scrutinize the realities on the ground. Emiliou himself stressed that migrants’ rights must be fully protected. Regarding our latest reports (see our [Scirocco of 9th march 2026](#)) most people that were brought to Albania had lived in Italy for years but lost their jobs and, as a consequence, their residence permits. They face de facto detention, without any criminal record. A lot of people do not even get information about why they are deported to Albania. [The obstruction of legal aid](#) that Italian authorities use to avoid accountability for allegations of abuse continues with the ongoing deportations of people to Albania. Moreover, as reported by [Avvenire](#), residents that live close to the center in Gjader reported hearing people shout inside the detention center on a regular basis, as well as many incidents about people trying to get to the hospital in order to escape from the center. [Meanwhile Melonis’ party Fratelli d’Italia \(Fdi\)](#) and the party [Forza Italia](#) are using the centers in Albania as a political strategy and instrumentalize the “less arrivals” rhetoric in order to distract from the cruelty and procedural inefficiency of the Albanian centers. Following a visit, MP Sara Kelany described the Gjader center as [“operating at full capacity,”](#) citing 82 detainees out of approximately 96 places. Similarly, Alessandro Battilocchio argued that reduced irregular arrivals show [Italy is “on the right track.”](#)

Again, the decline in arrival numbers is mentioned by members of parliament without considering rising deaths of people on the move trying to cross the Mediterranean. Additionally, several rulings by Italian courts rejecting the detention of people in the Albanian centers emphasize that the deal is far from being compatible with international law.

Additionally, Fdi and Forza Italia completely ignore [Italy's colonial legacy in Albania](#). Giorgia Meloni speaks of a “historical friendship” between Albania and Italy, overlooking the less-than-friendly history when Italy invaded Albania during the fascist regime. It's interesting to note how Italy is leveraging former colonies to form agreements aimed at restricting migration. In order to safeguard human rights, the focus on detention measures and repatriation within migration management needs to stop. This system of containment and securitization only leads to further exclusion and health risks for people on the move and is detrimental for wider social progress.

