

Scirocco - Latest news from Italy

14.08.2026: Italy is planning to introduce a naval blockade: update on the draft-law

Meanwhile the national implementation on CEAS was adopted

With the beginning of the year 2026 the Italian government continued their strategy of pushing anti-immigration laws through draft laws. As we reported in our [Scirocco in January](#) , they presented the so-called “[security package](#)”, two new pieces of legislation, a bill and a decree, introducing new measures on public order, immigration, youth crime and limits on demonstrations. However, many measures regarding the immigration part were blocked by the president [Sergio Mattarella as he declared them unconstitutional](#). The draft law included the introduction of a *naval blockade*¹. The ban, directed at NGOs even without naming them, since it's not applicable to boats, can be imposed in four cases: “terrorism risk, exceptional migratory pressure, health emergencies, international events requiring security measures”. [For NGOs it will be difficult](#) to comply with these directives without betraying their humanitarian mission. And one can bet that legal disputes will open up at various levels. It's likely the government is counting on this to build consensus for future political clashes and to fuel the rhetoric of internal enemies who obstruct border defense. Most likely it is above all a political signal that Meloni is trying to send with the economy in a tailspin and the upcoming elections in 2027: she is repeating the same [old formula](#): the rhetoric on security and her fight against People on the Move.

The naval blockade was already part of Frattelli d'Italia's [election campaign](#) in 2021: They published a statement explaining what they meant with a sea or naval blockade, reinforcing collaboration with Libyan authorities.

According to Meloni's party, in this case the naval blockade would consist of “[a European military mission, carried out in agreement with the Libyan authorities, to prevent boats of immigrants from departing toward Italy](#)”. Now setting their focus on the criminalization of search and rescue operations and the Italy-Albania model.

¹In cases framed as “[serious threats to public order or national security](#)” government orders could limit or completely ban ships from passing through or stopping in Italy's territorial waters. Moreover, severe penalties are introduced if a ship does not follow government orders. For example, if a ship's captain or owner does not provide information requested by the border police, or ignores their instructions, they could be fined between 2,000 and 10,000 Euros. Their vessel could also be stopped for 20 days. If this happens again, the ship could be held for up to two months and, in the end, even seized. The draft law also says that people rescued at sea on ships affected by these measures could be taken to third countries that have agreements with Italy, including Albania.

While the draft law (DDL 1869) which contains the interdiction to access Italian territorial waters in Capo I, alongside a broader legislative delegation in Capo II, should proceed under a standard, non-expedited parliamentary timeline with its examination starting after the summer break, in order to meet the deadlines on the implementation of the Common European Asylum system that entered into force in June 2026 an emergency intervention was required² in order to convert the measures into law by 11 August 2026.

On August 5 the Chamber of Deputies gave final approval to the bill converting Decree-Law No. 100 of 12 June 2026, containing "Urgent measures on justice and for the implementation of the European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum of 14 May 2024." This is a measure that affects two distinct areas: the administration of justice and the implementation of CEAS, transposing Directive (EU) 2024/1346 on reception conditions and adapting national law to Regulations (EU) 2024/1348 on the common procedure for international protection, 2024/1349 on the border return procedure, 2024/1351 on asylum and migration management, 2024/1356 on screening at external borders, and 2024/1358 on the new Eurodac system. Among the changes with the greatest practical impact:

- the introduction of a prefectural measure "authorizing residence in a specific place" as an alternative to detention.
- setting the maximum detention period in the border procedure at 12 weeks from registration of the application extending from 60 to 90 days the period, now running from formalization (rather than mere submission) of the application, before which an applicant for international protection is barred from access to employment.
- the transfer of jurisdiction over the validation of detention from the Court of Appeal to the specialized sections of the courts.

With the Chamber's final approval, [the parliamentary process for the conversion bill is now complete](#). The measure must now be promulgated and published in the Official Gazette (official journal of record of the Italian government). The conversion law, with the amendments made to the decree-law, will enter into force the day after its publication in the Official Gazette.

The measure also provides for provisions on legal aid at state expense and introduces a link between the automated fingerprint and facial image identification system (screening and identification provided for under the new rules) and the Interior Ministry's data processing center.

As announced in advance by Interior Minister Piantedosi new grounds for asylum applications are being regulated (for example, failure to respond in a timely manner to summonses and communications, or failure of the person concerned to appear). [From a legal standpoint](#), jurisdiction over the validation of detention of international protection applicants is being brought back under the specialized immigration sections of the courts (it had in fact been moved to the Court of Appeal), and dedicated case-processing offices are being established for faster resolution of decisions.

² There is a 60 days deadline for EU transposition laws.



The text has partly also absorbed an earlier measure, the Immigration bill, which had been approved by the Council of Ministers last February and which, in addition to the detention measures, also included the *naval blockade*. The bill had already been assigned to the Constitutional Affairs Committee in the Senate, where it still remains. The provisions were not absorbed into the new decree. Nevertheless, Interior Minister Piantedosi stated at a press conference that "[The Immigration bill will remain in Parliament.](#)"

The government does not stop with their instrumentalization of penal power in order to advance an ideology of public order and security. Most importantly, the implementation of a *naval blockade* would make it even more difficult to save lives at sea, while the new detention measures deprive People on the Move of fundamental rights such as the freedom of arbitrary detention.