

Scirocco - Latest News from Italy

07.10.2026: No certificates for CPRs

On September 17, [twenty-three doctors](#) from different cities all over Italy have undergone searches under the allegation for falsehood in public act on suspicion of signing fake medical certificates to prevent the entry of migrants into "Return Detention Centers" (*Centri di Permanenza per il Rimpatrio*, short: CPR). According to the allegations of the *Office of the Public Prosecutor at the Court of Ravenna*, the doctors falsely certified people as unsuitable for the detention in the CPRs in at least 34 cases.

The criminalization of migration does not for the first time affect doctors operating in the context of migrant detention. [Earlier this year](#) eight doctors have been temporarily suspended from their profession for similar allegations. Courts banned three of the doctors under investigation from practicing for ten months, while another five were removed for ten months from handling deportation cases. However, these rulings fail to take into account the growing political [pressure on medical professionals](#) and the documented human rights violations that occur in CPRs.

In Italy, a doctor affiliated with the national health system [must certify](#) that individuals are fit for life in a secure environment before they can be transferred to a CPR. However, [according to the European Committee on the Prevention of Torture \(CPT\)](#), the assessments are commonly brief, focus on communicable diseases or main vital signs, and are conducted by certifying medics who have (just like many other people) little knowledge of the conditions inside the CPRs. The lack of knowledge is politically calculated to veil the human rights abuses happening within them.

There is [consistent](#) and overwhelming evidence about the health problems stemming from even short periods of time in CPRs. A recent [WHO report of 2026](#) indicates that CPRs are inherently harmful and exposes people social and environmental conditions, which systematically cause and aggravate mental and physical health-problems. The WHO concludes, that "(...) to prevent the damaging health impacts of detention, immigration detention should be avoided during migration and asylum proceedings." In that light, CPRs appear to be designed to actively cause suffering, uncertainty, and illness among the people living within them.

Italy's far-right government structurally veils what happens inside the CPRs. The clinical evaluation to certify whether a migrant is eligible for detention in the CPRs is often [reduced to a mere bureaucratic act](#). Doctors' visits in CPRs are supposed to be carried out unregistered in a few minutes, under the absence of cultural mediation, and under the pressure of law enforcement. In that light, the governmental interference on the medical certification of migrants in CPRs illustrates an [attempt to bend the medical profession into security needs](#) that violate migrants' human rights. This gives rise to a significant ethical conflict: The medical mandate to protect health clashes with the expectations of Italy's far-right government aiming to put medical practice at the service of detention and deportation.

While some doctors give in to the structural pressures induced by the racist policies of the Italian far-right government, others uphold the [professional autonomy of medics](#) against governmental interference.

The debate over the integrity of doctors in the context of documenting the health status of detainees at the CPR is a political tool. It is not really about the doctors. Rather, Italy's far-right government is seeking to build domestic political pressure, stir up outrage, and draw public attention to alleged security risks - all of which are intended to justify a more restrictive immigration policy. In particular, it is important to highlight the plan to build [six more CPRs](#) and to reactivate at least 106 existing, abandoned facilities. At the same time, measures are being taken at the EU level to [strengthen Frontex](#) and [establish return hubs in countries outside the European Union](#). This means that more places will be created where people are systematically detained and deprived of their rights. This must be strongly rejected. The government's racist policies create a supposed security problem in order to justify measures based on fear. This is evident in the [tension between the far-right government in Rome and some of the regional governments](#), which are rightly criticizing the construction of additional CPRs. While in some regions right regional governments build their critique on the CPRs on the racist security rationale of the national government, [other regions](#) express their solidarity with the doctors and position themselves against the general concept of CPRs.

[CPRs are invisible settings](#) in which the right to health and the right to healthcare (besides many other fundamental rights) are systematically neglected. In a recent case [doctors were not allowed to enter the facilities](#) of the [CPR Corso Brunelleschi](#) in Turin, in which according to [a recent report of the GNPL](#) in average happen two acts of [self-harm](#) every three days. The CPR in Turin is [no exception](#), but one of countless cases of physical and psychological abuse.

Migrants without the legal right to remain in Italy, who are medically deemed too weak, cannot be housed and processed for deportation in Italy's detention facilities, known as CPRs. Especially psychiatric vulnerabilities and infectious diseases are the main arguments used in certificates attesting that migrants are unsuitable for detention. Considering the [desolate state of the CPRs](#), which are in themselves unacceptable as they violate the rights and dignity of those arrested, the detention of people on the move in CPRs has additionally to be medically considered a health risk, that no one should have to endure.

In that light, [nobody is suitable for detention in a CPR](#). It is cynical to expect medical professionals to act contrary to their professional mandate to protect people's health and to contribute to the detention of migrants by issuing certificates under pressure.

The far right is once again politicizing and sensationalizing an issue which could have resolved through human rights-based measures in the first place. CPRs have [long been criticized](#) for their human rights violations. Doctors are calling for legislations that respect the professional mandate of medical practitioners and does not turn doctors into immoral judges serving the governments racist ideology. Assuming that asylum seekers and people on the move become criminals when they are not held in custody is inherently racist and [responsibilizing doctors for any future actions](#) of their patients is unacceptable.

For this reason, it is necessary to be at the side of the twenty-three doctors, their professional autonomy, and the right of each person, regardless of nationality and administrative condition, to receive adequate care and to see their dignity respected. The actual crime is not committed by doctors doing their job, but by the degrading incarceration of people on the move who are getting systematically marginalized.

If today medics risk becoming criminals because they certify the illness of a person that the state wants to expel, then the problem is not the doctor. It is a cruel system that prioritizes to put health after detention, the person after the procedure, and rights after expulsion. It's that system that needs to be changed, meanwhile we stand with the doctors under investigation.

