
Timeline June, July, August 2025

Palermo

borderline-europe, Sicily

SCIROCCO

News from Italy



Scirocco [ʃiˈrokko-Schirokko] is a hot, strong south-easterly wind that carries dust and sand across the Mediterranean to Sicily and northern Italy, often lasting only for just a few hours. This short info is published since March 2021, and since June 2025 in a new format: Instead of once a month, the new Scirocco timeline provides up-to-date information on the latest political and social developments in Italy relating to the topic of migration. Every three months you can find a summary off the scirocco topics on the website.

Migration policies Italy

September 1, 2025

The Controversial Accelerated Border Procedure Endangers the Right to International Protection

Over the weekend, 132 migrants arrived in Lampedusa, including 18 Egyptians who reportedly fled due to economic hardship and in the hope of a better life in Europe. They were immediately subjected to the so-called [accelerated border procedure](#) – a practice that is being applied with increasing frequency. This procedure comes into effect when the reason for fleeing stated in the asylum application does not fall under the Geneva Refugee Convention. This mainly affects people fleeing for economic reasons.

Compared to the previous year, the procedure has changed to some extent: under the accelerated border process, deadlines are [drastically shortened](#), and the authorities barely take into account the individual circumstances of those seeking protection. In practice, this means that migrants from countries classified as “safe,” such as Egypt and Bangladesh, are often rejected immediately, without their right to a fair asylum process being fully respected. As is already the case in [Porto Empedocle](#), decisions are made solely by the territorial commission. It must reach a decision within nine days: the hearing takes place within seven days, and the decision must then be issued within the following two days. If the application is rejected, deportation becomes mandatory – the affected individuals can appeal the decision, but the deportation is not automatically suspended.

The consistent application of the accelerated border procedure raises serious human rights concerns and puts migrants under immense pressure. The extremely short time frame in which asylum applications are decided leaves little room

for adequate legal assistance. As a result, the fundamental right to protection from arbitrary deportation is being systematically undermined.

August 28, 2025

Dehumanising discourse following the fatal shipwreck off Lampedusa on August 13, 2025

At least 27 people died in a [tragic shipwreck near Lampedusa on 13 August 2025](#). They came from Somalia, Egypt and Ethiopia – and another 15 to 20 people are still missing today. The events following the tragedy were marked by structural racism, which manifested itself in various ways. The resources of the Lampedusa cemetery have still not been adapted to cope with mass deaths in the Mediterranean, which is why the deceased were taken by ferry to Agrigento in Sicily. There, the bodies, some of which had not yet been identified, were distributed among various cemeteries – a procedure that hindered both the search and identification by relatives and a dignified farewell and mourning process. The Sicilian association [MEM.MED- Memoria Mediterranea, together with two survivors](#) of Somali origin, supports the families of the deceased and missing persons with free legal advice on the process of searching for, identifying and transferring the dead. They also offer the possibility of identification via video call if relatives are unable to travel to Agrigento. Most of the identifications were made by photographs alone, as the authorities hastily sealed the coffins. Several coffins were marked with an ‘X’ and have [still not been identified](#). The media also follows an agenda of dehumanisation: people are referred to as anonymous numbers, the tragedy is portrayed as one of many, and hardly anyone mentions the survivors. But they are [family members and friends](#) who had to watch their loved ones die at sea. Our thoughts are

- with the 25-year-old Somali woman who lost both her [one-year-old daughter](#) and her husband.
- with the Somali woman who lost her younger sister.
- with the young Egyptian man who lost his uncle and cousin.
- with the young Egyptian man who lost his friend.
- with the young Ethiopian man who lost his brother.

- with the other Egyptian man who lost three cousins.

We demand a full investigation into the events that will bring those responsible for this tragedy to justice. Furthermore, we demand that the search for the missing persons and the identification of the dead continue and that dignified mourning processes be made possible. We demand justice for the victims and their families.

August 20, 2025

Right to asylum denied: Court condemns Italy for illegal pushback to Libya

On July 1, 2009, the Italian navy vessel *Orione* intercepted 82 people off the coast of Lampedusa and handed them over to a Libyan-flagged patrol boat, which returned them to Libya. The individuals were denied the opportunity to apply for asylum, in clear violation of Article 10 of the Italian Constitution, which guarantees the right to international protection.

Sixteen years later, a court of appeals in Rome has held the Italian state accountable for the unlawful pushback. The claimants, Eritrean refugees who were on board the vessel and now reside in Europe, were each awarded €15,000 in compensation.

This is not an isolated case: as early as 2012, the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled in the landmark case *Hirsi Jamaa v. Italy* that similar pushbacks to Libya constituted a clear violation of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Despite repeated rulings, Italy continues its cooperation with Libyan authorities – a policy that routinely results in the detention of refugees in inhumane camps. The recent verdict underscores that these practices are not only in breach of international law, but also violate Italy's constitutional obligations to protect those seeking asylum.

August 4, 2025

CJEU Ruling on “Safe Countries of Origin”: Implications for Italian Migration Policy

On August 1st, the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) issued a landmark ruling that significantly alters the legal framework for designating “safe countries of origin” within the EU. The judgment makes it clear: national courts must be able to [review](#) the lists of so-called safe countries drawn up by their governments. Furthermore, the sources of information used to define a country as safe must be made transparent. The CJEU also emphasized that a country of origin [cannot be considered safe](#) if specific groups within the population are subject to persecution.

This ruling directly affects asylum seekers from countries such as Bangladesh, Tunisia, and Egypt, which are classified as safe by Italian authorities. Applicants from these countries are subjected to [accelerated asylum procedures](#) and are typically detained for the duration of the process, with the aim of [facilitating](#) faster deportation if their application is rejected. According to the Court, however, detention in such cases [cannot occur automatically](#). In practice, this means that systematic detention without an individual judicial review is incompatible with EU law.

Although the so-called “Albania model” – a plan by the Italian government to carry out accelerated asylum procedures outside EU territory – prompted several Italian courts to request clarification from the CJEU, the Court has not yet ruled on the legality of outsourcing asylum procedures to third countries.

Situation of refugees

August 14, 2025

Without Protection, Without Rights: Systemic Failure in Italy's Refugee Policy

The situation for refugees across Italy continues to deteriorate. Conditions are particularly dramatic in [Trieste](#), the first Italian city along the so-called Balkan route. For over a month, migrants – including 173 men, two women, and four families with children – have been evicted daily from an informal sleeping area in the city's old port.

Even donated blankets have been confiscated, forcing many to sleep on the streets without access to water, showers, or medical care. Civil society support, including from groups like Linea d'Ombra and local volunteers, remains the only assistance available. The city itself ignores its obligation to uphold the right to shelter and basic services for asylum seekers. Transfers to other Italian cities have been [significantly reduced](#). The local reception system has collapsed – including the ability to lodge an asylum claim – leaving hundreds of people abandoned in public spaces.

In [Trento](#), similarly alarming conditions were once again documented in a refugee accommodation. At Residenza Fersina, where around 250 people are accommodated, toilets are blocked, garbage piles up in the hallways, mold and stench make the facility uninhabitable. Even scorpions are reportedly present. Only after public mobilization a clean-up was initiated – but structural solutions are still lacking.

One of the most alarming cases this month was the [death of two Egyptian migrant workers](#), Sayed (39) and Saad (21). Employed without contracts or permits in a private villa near Venice, they died of asphyxiation in a septic tank due to toxic fumes. Neither of them had any protective gear. Their deaths are a stark reminder of the fatal risks migrants face in informal and exploitative labor conditions. Overall, Italy's migration policy continues to be shaped by exclusion and institutional neglect – despite growing pressure from civil society for structural reform.

Libya

August 8, 2025

Almasri Victims Denied Justice as Italian Court Clears PM

On August 4, the investigation [against Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni in connection with the extradition of the Libyan war criminal Osama Almasri was dropped](#). Almasri had been arrested in Turin in January 2025 following an [arrest warrant from the International Criminal Court \(ICC\)](#). Yet, he was released a few days later and flown back to Libya on an Italian government aircraft. The court in Rome stated there was insufficient evidence of Meloni's

direct involvement in his release and departure. Meloni herself called that argument “absurd” and publicly defended the decision of her ministers, who, she said, had not acted without her approval. However, the investigations against Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi, Justice Minister Carlo Nordio, and State Secretary Alfredo Mantovano, are to continue. For this, parliamentary approval is required – where Meloni's governing coalition holds a clear majority.

Almasri is accused of the serious crimes, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture, murder, and sexual violence against migrants and children. [Activist Lam Magok Biel Ruei](#), who was both a victim and a witness to the atrocities committed by the Libyan torturer Almasri, had the courage in February to file charges against the Italian government. [The court's decision is more than disappointing](#), it deprives him and many other survivors of Almasri's violence of their right to justice. Almasri will continue – supported by the Italian government – to abuse, rape, and torture people in Libya.

July 28, 2025:

Italy Trains Eastern Libyan Soldiers

Until now, it had not been publicly known: On several military bases in Italy, soldiers of Libyan General Khalifa Haftar, who has controlled eastern Libya since 2017 and is supported by Russia, are being trained. Like the competing government in Tripoli, Haftar claims to be the only legitimate government of Libya – with the key difference of not being internationally recognized. In practice, the militia fighters of the [Tariq Ben Zeyad](#) group, which is controlled by Haftar's forces, engage in illegal killings, torture, and disappearances – particularly targeting migrants. According to investigations by the newspaper [Il Post](#), which have now been confirmed by the Italian Ministry of Defense, the Italian army is nonetheless organizing multi-month training courses for Haftar's soldiers. The photos, most of which were published on social media in 2024, show barracks and training centers in Pisa and Sardinia.

While Italian politicians have been paying official visits to both sides – Tripoli and Benghazi – for years, General Haftar [turned away](#) an EU delegation from the country in July. The EU representatives refused to be photographed with Haftar's ministers, as such images could have been interpreted as an international recognition of his administration. The delegation travelled to Benghazi in early July to discuss ways of tackling migration across the Mediterranean, given that arrivals from eastern Libya have [increased](#) significantly.

July 22, 2025

The prosecution of Libyan war criminals: Italy evades responsibility

The [arrest of Khaled al Hisri](#), known as Al Buti, by German authorities on July 18 has reignited debate over Europe's relationship with Libyan militias implicated in grave human rights abuses. On July 18, the German authorities arrested Al Buti, a commander of the Special Deterrence Force (Rada). He is accused of [murder, torture, rape, and sexual violence](#) committed in Libya between 2015 and 2020, mostly in the notorious [Mitiga prison](#). His extradition to the International Criminal Court (ICC) is now under consideration in Berlin.

The Mitiga prison is at the center of a long-running [ICC investigation](#) into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Libya that has been ongoing since 2011, with a list of suspected individuals including Al Buti himself. The same case has also involved [Osama Almasri](#), Rada's top commander who was intercepted, released and flown back to Libya on an Italian government plane, causing a political scandal. While the Italian government used a [letter](#) from the Libyan ambassador to Tajani, the Italian Foreign Minister, as justification for organising the repatriation flight, the ICC is sticking to its accusation: Italy has [not fulfilled](#) its obligation to cooperate and has disregarded the court's requirements.

The case could mark a turning point for international accountability in Libya. The ICC has long faced obstacles to prosecute crimes from the Libyan conflict, partly due to political interference and the strategic partnerships between European

governments and Libyan militias for "[migration control](#)".

Italy-Albania Deal

July 25, 2025

"Deportation at any cost": Italy's offshore detention centres in Albania cost over €100,000 per day

Italy's newly built deportation centres in Gjadër and Shëngjin, Albania, were meant – according to the Meloni government – to make deportations "more efficient." In reality, the opposite is true. As highlighted in a recent report by [ActionAid and the University of Bari](#), the project generates enormous costs with minimal practical effect.

Between mid-October and the end of December 2024, the Rome Prefecture paid €570,000 to the operating organisation for just five days of actual operation of the CPRs (Pre-Removal Centres) in Gjadër and Shëngjin. During this time, only 20 people were detained. That amounts to [€114,000 per day](#) – an unprecedented cost for a system that has proven almost entirely ineffective in carrying out deportations and instead reproduces systematic, state-sanctioned violence.



The main justification for the existence of CPRs – that they improve return procedures – has long been

Photo: [meltingpot.org](#) (Klodiana Millona) – Boardercenter in Gjadër

disproven. According to official data, in 2024 [only](#)

41.8% of those held in detention centres were actually deported – the lowest rate since 2014. Out of 6,164 people placed in CPRs, only 2,576 were returned. The rest remained in detention for months, in some cases up to 18 months, a stark indicator of how far the system strays from legal guarantees and how deeply it inflicts human suffering.

The so-called Italy-Albania deal is widely seen as a “civilisational low point”: costly, ineffective, and incompatible with human rights. The more Europe externalises its borders, the more opaque, expensive, and inhumane, its treatment of migrants and asylum seekers becomes.

June 25, 2025

Media reports reveal direct deportations from Albanian CPR

On 23 June 2025, Italian media reported on an incident that had already taken place on 9 May: In a cloak-and-dagger operation, the Italian Meloni government deported five Egyptian citizens who had been housed in the Italian deportation centre (CPR) in Gjadër (Albania) via the airport in Tirana. According to previous practice, people housed in Albania were always brought to Italy before deportation. The deportation flight took off from Rome Fiumicino International Airport and landed in Albania shortly afterwards. There, the five people were taken on board and subsequently deported to Egypt. This procedure raises serious doubts as to its compatibility with applicable regulations: According to Gianfranco Schiavone of the Associazione per gli studi giuridici sull'immigrazione (Association for Legal Studies on Immigration), the transport of the individuals took place in a kind of legal vacuum. The transport of the individuals outside the centre of Gjadër on Albanian territory was not subject to judicial review and was therefore carried out without any legal basis. Furthermore, the immediate deportation contravenes the European Return Regulation. This practice also makes it difficult for the public to monitor compliance with the fundamental human rights of those affected.

Criminalisation

July 18, 2025

Leading CJEU ruling in the Kinsa case: anti-smuggling laws must not violate fundamental rights

On June 3, 2025, O.B., a Congolese woman and mother who was arrested in August 2019 immediately after arriving at the airport in Bologna, was acquitted. O.B. traveled to Italy with her 8-year-old daughter and 13-year-old niece, whom she had taken into her care after the death of her sister, using counterfeit passports to escape death threats from her ex-husband. She was separated from the two children at the airport and charged with “facilitation of unauthorised entry”.

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has now ruled that the protection of minors and the unity of the family, as enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, must apply. It is not a criminal offense to enter the EU with children in one's care and apply for asylum.

The decision reinforces calls for humanitarian exceptions to prevent the abuse of Italian anti-smuggling laws, which are being used to criminalize people on the move and those who show solidarity with them. O.B., but also many other people who have been arbitrarily criminalized for migration or solidarity, deserve justice. It is to be hoped that the court ruling will have an impact on the ongoing negotiations on the EU Facilitators Package.

Labour exploitation

July 11, 2025

Borgo Mezzanone: Inhumane Living Conditions for Migrant Seasonal Workers in Southern Italy's Agriculture

Around 5,000 migrants from Somalia, Nigeria, Ghana, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Syria currently live in the informal settlement of Borgo Mezzanone, near the city of Foggia (Apulia). Most of them are seasonal workers in the local tomato harvest. False promises and illegal employment agencies brought them in the exploitative conditions of southern Italian agriculture. The living conditions on the “pista”, as the settlement is also known, are

extremely dramatic, especially in the summer months: the shanties, in which up to five people are squeezed into a small space, reach temperatures of up to 49 degrees. Residents report that they can barely breathe. There is neither sewage nor a waste disposal system, and garbage builds up. Water is only supplied twice a week. There is also an increased risk of fire due to the heat. Many people have already contracted illness as a result of accumulated nitrogen and smoke, and some residents have lost their lives in fires.

The reality of women on-site (who make up only 10% of all residents) is characterized by multiple marginalization, as [Amnesty International](#) reports: Almost all women are affected by human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Many live without valid residence papers and have insufficient knowledge of Italian. They live in great isolation in the camp. Due to economic hardship, fear of negative consequences for their families in their country of origin and the threat of deportation, only a few dare to reach out to the police or aid organizations and thus remain in exploitative conditions without support.

According to Giovanni Mininni, General Secretary of the trade union Flai Cgil, not even a single euro has been invested in Borgo Mezzanone so far - neither in occupational health and safety nor in decent living conditions or infrastructure. It remains to be seen whether the recent [visit by a delegation](#) of trade unionists, Italian and European parliamentarians, and representatives of the European Commission will lead to improvements in living conditions in the settlement.

July 4, 2025

Migrants as commodities: new decree on labour migration

The new *decreto flussi*, which sets the entry quotas for foreign workers for the period 2026-2028, aims to "ensure the labour resources that are indispensable for the national economic system and production", according to the [Italian government](#). Over the next three years, 500,000 people - 10% more people than before - are to enter the Italian labor market. While the instrument meets the expectations of

entrepreneurs on paper, in 2024, only 12% of workers who came to Italy with the *decreto flussi* found a permanent position and received a residence permit: Infinitely long waiting times, inadequate bureaucracy and organized crime are just some of the reasons for this. In fact, the *decreto flussi* is "an outstanding machine for creating illegality", as [Filippo Miraglia](#), part of the *Ero Straniero* campaign, explains. The illegalized migrants are the ones [who suffer](#): They are "very likely to live in our country in complete precarity and without documents, at risk of being exploited".

For the Italian government's rhetoric, the record-high *decreto flussi* and the policies of isolation – the Albanian detention camps, the criminalisation of civilian sea rescue organizations, and support for regimes that torture refugees – are part of the same agenda: to decide who is allowed to enter Italy. In fact, what these seemingly contradictory government policies have in common is the use of migration as firstly a political tool to awaken racism and feelings of insecurity resulting in restrictions on civil liberties, and secondly to create an exploitable workforce, notes [il manifesto](#). Italian immigration policy forces migrants to accept any working condition and any abuse, as dismissal entails the risk of deportation.

CPR

July 8, 2025

Insufficient ruling by the constitutional court: CPRs remain a legal grey zone

Italy's deportation centers (CPRs) are facing renewed criticism after a recent ruling by the Italian [Constitutional Court](#). On July 3, the Court acknowledged that detention in CPRs constitutes a restriction of personal freedom under Article 13 of the Constitution, and therefore requires an appropriate legal framework. Yet instead of declaring the current system unconstitutional, the Court declared the complaint [inadmissible](#) and called on the Parliament to act. The problem is that CPRs operate in a legal grey zone, governed by internal regulations that vary across centres, without uniform national standards. Human rights groups like Antigone have warned for years of [arbitrary](#)

[restrictions](#), inadequate legal protections and systemic rights violations.

Medical professionals working inside CPRs have also raised alarms: detainees suffer from untreated health conditions and psychiatric distress. Some of them are on hunger strikes, often without adequate care. The National Orders of Doctors *Fnomceo* denounces that “[CPRs put lives at risk](#)”.

Following the court's judgement, six migrants were [released](#) from CPRs in Rome and Gjader. At least three further applications are now being examined. However, the system as a whole remains unchanged. Critics note that although the court has paved the way for new legal challenges, it has not acted [decisively enough](#). As long as parliament does not pass a law that defines legal boundaries, supervision and the rights of detainees, people will continue to be locked up in the CPRs without justification.

July 1, 2025:

Inside the CPRs: abuse, isolation, and legal black holes

In the past weeks, multiple reports and testimonies have shed light on the structural problems in Italian deportation centres (CPRs). On 28 June, civil society groups mobilised in [Trapani](#) to protest against the use of administrative detention, denouncing prolonged isolation and structural violence. Interviews with detainees in the [Trapani-Milo CPR](#) describe inhumane conditions: people held for weeks without knowing why, unable to contact their families and to challenge their detention. According to [Ristretti Orizzonti](#), there are several obstacles that prevent migrants held in CPRs from accessing any legal remedy. A further investigation by [Diario Prevenzione](#) exposed the denial of the right to health inside CPRs, especially for those suffering from mental health issues. Meanwhile, videos published by [Avvenire](#) and [InfoMigrants](#) show violent scenes inside the CPR of Gradisca d'Isonzo, where police are seen beating a detainee. Authorities have denied abuse, but the footage reinforces concerns on the systemic violence and impunity inside CPRs. The CPR system, originally justified as a logistical tool for deportations, now

serves as a hidden and unaccountable detention regime. Migrants are locked for up until 18 months, without charges, without trial, and without rights.

June 20, 2025: Death and disappearance

Deaths and disappearances at the borders: between memory and erasure

On 13 June, we took part in a [conference organised by the association Memoria Mediterranea](#) and CLEDU (the Law Clinic of the University): “Together with the mothers, sisters, fathers, brothers and family members of people who have died or gone missing along European borders – at sea, in detention centres, or at border crossings – the event will provide a space for families to assert their struggle for the search, identification, truth and justice for their lost loved ones, in the face of the responsible and competent institutions.”

Memoria Mediterranea is the association that has taken over the structure of Borderline Sicilia, our former partner. Its primary focus is on supporting relatives in the identification and repatriation of human remains.

At the conference, the relatives of the deceased and missing at the borders had the opportunity to speak (see pictures below). In the afternoon, a list was drawn up of the measures urgently needed from the state in order to carry out identifications in a systematic and standardised manner and to establish a binding procedure within the authorities in cases of deaths and disappearances at sea.

We also featured the voices of MemMed in our Streiflicht magazine “[Verlorene Leben, unerzählte Geschichten](#)” (currently only in German).

Further information on the situation in Italy can be found under "Projects" on our [Homepage](#), in previous issues of [Scirocco](#) and in our Spotlight "[Cosmos Palermo](#)".

Weitere Informationen zur Situation in Italien finden Sie unter „Projekte“ auf unserer [Homepage](#), in den vorherigen Ausgaben des [Scirocco](#) sowie in unserem [Streifenlicht](#) „[Kosmos Palermo](#)“.



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The Scirocco is published in 2025 with the kind support of the
Evangelical Church in the Rhineland (EKIR))

Coverphoto: Wolfgang Hasselmann, unsplash