

## How Cyprus has been quietly deporting Syrian refugees

Monday 17 February, 2025

Over the past year, *The New Arab* (TNA) has looked into Cyprus' [Voluntary Return Program](#), a flagship initiative designed to facilitate the return of migrants to their home countries "in an organised, safe, and dignified manner."

TNA's findings expose a starkly different reality. The Cypriot Ministry of Interior is pressuring individuals into so-called voluntary returns through coercion and deceit, undermining the country's obligations under the **European Convention on Human Rights**.

In the case of Syrian asylum seekers, this includes the denial of access to asylum, unlawful detention in inhumane conditions, and unfounded accusations of serious crimes. Despite these violations, the **European Commission (EC) and Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency**, continue to financially and operationally support the program. The EC has even promoted the Cypriot model as an example for other countries, raising concerns for the **more than one million Syrians currently living in Europe**.

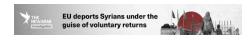
Read the full report [here](#).

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