

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

NEWSFLASH

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EU: Cruel migration detention regime exposes hypocrisy of European Commission

Recommendations by the European Commission to detain almost all irregular migrants before returning them to their home countries, with no limitations on where they can be apprehended, have laid bare the cruelty and hypocrisy of European Union (EU) Commissioners' migration policies, Amnesty International said today.

"Detention of irregular migrants, some of the most vulnerable people in Europe, should be a last resort. Instead the European Commission is pushing EU governments to round them up through almost any means necessary – whether that means through terrifying night raids, or asking social workers and doctors to cooperate in finding them. That children are included in this wide detention regime is truly shocking," said Iverna McGowan, Director of Amnesty International's EU Institutions Office.

"Commissioners' recent attempts to distance themselves from the despicable migration policies of the Trump administration now ring extremely hollow. If there were any doubts remaining about the hypocrisy of the European Commission's stance on migrants, today's announcements ought to quash them."

Background

[The Recommendation](#) released today provides guidance on how provisions of the Return Directive should be used to reinforce national administrative processes for returns. It recommends that EU member states should by 1 June 2017 undertake a number of measures, including:

- Increasing and mobilizing law enforcement and immigration authorities, if necessary on a "24/7" basis, which encourages night raids
- Coordinating with medical, judicial, detention authorities, guardianship systems and social services to swiftly implement returns
- Providing in national legislation for a maximum initial period of detention of six months and for the possibility of prolonging this to 18 months
- Ensuring national legislation does not preclude placing minors in detention or prohibits return decisions being issued to unaccompanied minors