
Migration: Mijatovic (Council of Europe), the countries' approach "causes thousands of avoidable deaths every year" in the Mediterranean

The European countries failed to "set up a coordinated, fair approach to sea crossings and to the protection of those who try to make them. Even worse, their approach causes thousands of avoidable deaths every year", though there are "ways and systems to reverse the trend". This has been written by Dunja Mijatović, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, in her introduction to the report published today, "A distress call for human rights. The widening gap in migrant protection in the Mediterranean". It takes stock of the member states' implementation of the Commissioner's 2019 Recommendation on the rescue of migrants at sea and lists a number of feasible measures, which should be urgently taken by the European states to provide an approach to sea crossings that complies with human rights. The period covered by the report is July 2019 to December 2020, and the picture is clear: "The situation of human rights in the Mediterranean is still disgraceful". Over 2,600 recorded deaths (but the real number of fatal accidents is not known), "growing disengagement of the States' fleets from the Mediterranean", obstacles in the NGOs' rescue operations, decisions to delay disembarkation, and non-allocation of a safe port. What's more, "cooperation with third countries has been strengthened despite undeniable evidence of serious breaches of human right": the 20 thousand people repatriated to Libya fall within this section. Anti-Covid measures have made the situation even worse. The ways to go: expanding resettlements, lifting restrictions on family reunifications, and finding safe, legal ways for migration.

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