

A third example is the denial of cash support to asylum seekers who have managed to regain some autonomy by living in private accommodation in Greece since July 2021, causing "a major setback in the integration process that will foster the conditions for ghettoization and marginalization" [4] , as stated by the Greek Council for Refugees.

**We demand respect for basic human rights at all levels! The European Union must secure the right to asylum, create safe and legal ways to enter the European Union, and then a policy of alternatives to camps, such as accommodation within the cities and local European communities. Moreover, the European Union must secure access to education, health and culture, and thus a policy that welcomes asylum seekers as what they are - human beings!**

**And this is not only the responsibility of the Greek government, but of all the governments of the European Union, including the EU authorities.**

You cannot receive the Nobel Peace Prize for Human Rights - as the European Union did in 2012 - and then deny people their right for asylum by pushbacks, lock people who are looking for peace and security in prison-like camps and deny them fundamental human rights on a daily basis. That is why we oppose the opening of the new camp on Samos, which symbolizes the failure of EU migration policies, and demand that asylum seekers are treated as human beings and have access to their rights - on Samos, in the European Union and worldwide!

[4] Greek Council for Refugees (2021): A big setback in integration: The cut in aid to asylum seekers: [www.gcr.gr](http://www.gcr.gr)

The photographs in this flyer show the new camps of Samos, in 2021.



## **INVITATION TO SHOW DISAGREEMENT WITH THE NEW REFUGEE CAMP AND SOLIDARITY WITH ASYLUM SEEKERS ON SAMOS & WORLDWIDE**



Photo source: MSF Sea

**From one inhuman refugee camp to another inhuman refugee camp:  
We demand solidarity and respect for Human Rights for asylum seekers instead of isolation and invisibility in camps like the new prison-like camp on Samos.**

**Join the Fight for Human Rights - on Samos and Worldwide!**

**WHEN? 17/09/2021, 6-9pm + 18/09/2021, 6-9pm**

**WHERE? Opposite to "Lion's Square"**

**(Pythagoras Central Square, at the Waterfront, Center of Vathy)**

Please wear Corona masks, keep 1.5 meters distance from each other and join our creative, artistic & peaceful standing protest!

While legal regulations and state actions make it increasingly difficult for people to access their most fundamental human rights, the new refugee camp on Samos will open on September 18, 2021, a project supported and 100% financed by the European Union. This camp has many features found in prisons: high military fences with barbed wire, drone surveillance, video surveillance, alarm systems, X-ray machines and metal detectors. In addition, the new camp on Samos is located in a very remote area (Zervou), 8 kilometers from the center of Vathy, and so far without access to public transport. There is no natural access to water and no natural shade in the camp.



While asylum procedures for many asylum seekers take up to several years, the European Union is hiding and isolating asylum seekers by sending them in remote areas, making it extremely difficult for children to go to school, for adults to work, and for everyone to receive proper medical treatment and to participate in social, economic or cultural life. Moreover, the very small amount of information available during the past months about the conditions of the new camp has added stress and anxiety to the people first affected by these changes.

As Doctors Without Borders' Head of Mission in Greece, Iorgos Karagiannis, highlights, the new prison-like camps "will continue to cause a degradation in people's mental health, a further protection crisis and will make the suffering of those trapped on the Greek islands even more invisible." [1]

**In this way, the European Union is undermining basic human rights to health, education, participation in the cultural life of the local community and freedom of movement.**

[1] Médecins Sans Frontières Greece (2021): Greece and EU must change approach to migration as scale of people's suffering revealed: [www.msf.org](http://www.msf.org)

Not only on Samos, but also on Lesbos, Chios, Kos and Leros so-called "Closed Controlled Structures" are planned to be built to house asylum seekers in remote areas, causing "large-scale and long-term deprivation of liberty [...] which has very harmful effects on their mental health, especially on children" [2] according to Council of Europe's Human Rights Commissioner Dunja Mijatovic. Such refugee camps are all part of the EU's so-called "hotspot" system of isolated refugee camps in Italy and Greece, setting a possible example for arriving asylum seekers in other European countries.

**We reject the fact that a prison-like camp should be a model for the asylum system in Europe.**

**Additionally, the right for Asylum itself is undermined more and more.** For example, through the practice of illegal pushbacks, which became a key instrument of the European border and immigration policy. Asylum seekers who reach Greek territorial waters or who have even already made it to the Greek islands, are dragged out to the sea in boats by the Greek Coast Guard supported by the European Border Protection Agency Frontex, abandoning the asylum seekers in the middle of the sea on floating, inflatable life rafts without engines. Although this policy violates the Geneva Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights, which are giving them the right to seek for asylum, illegal pushbacks enjoy support from the European Union. Since 2015, pushbacks in the Aegean and Evros have been a systematically planned and indirectly well-funded policy. During the COVID-19 pandemic illegal pushbacks at sea caused 2000 deaths. [3]

Another example is the Joint Ministerial Decision published on 7th June 2021, affecting especially people from Syria, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Somalia and Pakistan, even if they manage to actually apply for asylum in Greece. The EU currently considers Turkey a safe country to stay even if the Geneva Convention does not apply in Turkey for people from these five countries. This means that the Greek authorities reject their asylum claim in most cases, stating that Turkey is responsible for their asylum procedure. However, the Turkish authorities have not taken back any of these asylum seekers since March 2020. As a result, many asylum seekers are stuck in Greece without any possibility to actually get asylum, in a situation of limbo, even though they qualify for asylum.

[2] Reuters (2021): Greece seeks bids to build closed holding centres for migrants on islands: [www.reuters.com](http://www.reuters.com)

[3] See Tondo, Lorenzo (2021): Revealed: 2,000 refugee deaths linked to illegal EU pushbacks: [www.theguardian.com](http://www.theguardian.com)