

Monday, May 9, 2022

PRESS RELEASE

Special report 2021: Returns of third country nationals

The small number of forced returns and the constant detention of third country nationals in police detention cells instead of Pre-removal centres, are stressed in the Greek Ombudsman's Special report on Returns in 2021.

The Special Report refers also to the European framework on returns of third country nationals, the developments following the EU Commission's proposal in the New Pact for Asylum and Migration to create a single system of asylum and return procedures at the borders, as well as the Commission's proposal for an independent border monitoring mechanism. The need to enhance transparency in EU operations is the focus of the Greek Ombudsman's initiative together with his counterparts in other member-states to conduct independent monitoring in return operations (*the Nafplion initiative*).

In the capacity of the national external monitoring mechanism for returns, the Greek Ombudsman refers to the comments he published on domestic legislation amendments in relation to returns. The Special Reports summarizes the negative and positive points in forced return operations during 2021 observed by the Ombudsman's monitors.

The Special Report makes reference to the institutional cooperation with the Fundamental Rights Office of FRONTEX that continued in 2021, and the independent investigations initiated by the Greek Ombudsman following the referral of complaints by the FRONTEX Complaint Mechanism, among other, on illegal pushbacks.

Info: +30 213 1306600
press@synigoros.gr