

Informative note for what followed on Lesbos after the EU-Turkey deal of the 18th March

Following the EU-Turkey deal of the 18th March, a new scenery seemed to be applied on Lesbos, once more. The NATO, European and Turkish coastguard patrols have been intensified, minimising the migrants' boats that made it through the Greek borders, while a new internal border has been created at the port of Mytilene. All migrants that had arrived before this date have been forwarded to mainland Greece to end up in the various "hosting camps" and Lesbos has been transformed, together with the rest 4 islands that were included in the deal, into a singular prison for all those who continue arriving from 20 March onwards, date of the application of the deal.

The new EU-Turkey deal

In accordance with the provisions of the new treaty for those migrants who manage to pass to Europe, they are driven to detention in the 5 so-called hot spots in Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Kos and Leros, until the examination of their asylum application. Their detention includes their registration and identification from the Greek authorities and Frontex, and their desire to apply for asylum. Those who refuse to apply for asylum are deported back to the last country-station of their journey, in our case Turkey. Therefore they are blackmailed to apply for asylum in Greece regardless of the country of their real destination. If the application is refused on the first level, they have the right to appeal on a secondary committee. If asylum is granted, they have a slight chance of being "moved" to another country through the appropriate program, otherwise they are deported back to Turkey. However, even if they fill up all the criteria of being granted asylum under EU law, there is still a chance of being deported, in case the committee considers them safe for them.