

No extension of the EU-Turkey Deal! Stop the funding of human rights violations.

March 18, 2023 marks the seventh anniversary of the signing of the so-called "EU-Turkey Deal". After seven years of systematic human rights violations, the funding of the deal is coming to an end. This now raises the very concrete question of possible follow-up funding. On the occasion of the anniversary of the deal we, a broad alliance of migration policy organizations, call on the German government and the EU Commission to initiate a turnaround in migration policy. There must be no new edition of the dirty EU-Turkey Deal and the associated institutionalized human rights violations. The EU must take responsibility, recognize migration as a fact and create safe flight routes!

The deal and the situation for refugees in Turkey

On 18.03.2016, the so-called EU-Turkey deal came into force. Among other things, it enabled systematic deportations from EU territory back to Turkey without examining asylum grounds. This was intended to make it impossible for people to continue their journey to the EU. Since then, thousands of people have been stuck in Turkey or in Greek camps. If they make it further, they face illegal pushbacks and massive violence by border guards along the so-called Balkan route.

Turkey has signed the Geneva Refugee Convention only with a "geographical reservation" - it applies only to refugees from Europe. Fleeing people who are deported back there as a result of the EU-Turkey deal are exposed to severe human rights violations. Reports show that people are also repeatedly deported to war-torn Syria. Especially in the Kurdish areas along the Turkish-Syrian border, the Turkish regime has been waging a bitter struggle against the Kurdish population for decades, has been involved in the Syrian civil war for many years and systematically persecutes the political opposition.

The situation is now further aggravated by the recent earthquakes in Turkey, Kurdistan and northern Syria. As a result, the already inhumane living conditions in the large camps in the Turkish-Syrian border region have once again drastically worsened.

Many people are fleeing explicitly from the Turkish violence in the direction of Europe. Deporting people there of all places and exposing them to the arbitrariness of the Turkish regime is inhumane. Cooperation with the Erdoğan regime, which contributes significantly to the causes of flight, once again reveals the hypocritical way in which the EU states deal with their otherwise often invoked "values". The fact that they support and further legitimize a dictatorial regime only fits into the picture.

Consequences of the deal for European migration policy

Since the conclusion of the EU-Turkey deal, the previously central escape routes via the Western Balkans or the Aegean Sea were supposed to be de facto closed. In practice, people continue to make their way despite all obstacles. However, the migration control measures are making this journey increasingly dangerous and difficult. By means of illegal push and pullbacks, the European border protection agency Frontex, together with national border police forces, secures European coasts and national borders, deliberately accepting the death of fleeing people.

At the same time, the deal serves as a blueprint for further agreements with states such as Croatia, Bulgaria, but also Libya to enable practices that violate human rights, such as arbitrary detentions, physical and psychological violence and illegal deportations with the approval of the EU. The EU thus buys itself free of any rule of law obligation under the slogan of externalization and thus systematically ignores its own law.

With the EU-Turkey deal, the EU has not only finally abandoned a human rights-based migration policy, but also fundamentally abandoned any attempt to develop a European migration policy based on solidarity that protects the lives of every fleeing person and provides access to a fair and transparent asylum procedure. Instead, autocratic regimes are provided with billions by the EU to wage war against their own population and fleeing people. The fleeing people themselves become a political displacement mass, their health and future worthless.

We demand: No billions for human rights violations. Stop the deportations to Turkey and elsewhere!

For years, migration researchers have repeatedly pointed out that this repressive migration policy cannot begin to solve the fundamental challenges of global flight and migration movements. In order to reduce border crossings in the short term, the suffering of fleeing people is further exacerbated and their deaths are knowingly accepted. But instead of looking for a much-needed solution to the inhumane situation at Europe's external borders, once again only a shift of escape routes to ever more deadly routes is being ensured. The currently emerging policy of the EU is once again forcing an intensification of deportations, as was shown at the extraordinary meeting of the European Council in early February. A fatal tendency, which will further increase the suffering and death at the European external borders. The EU Commission must no longer allow itself to be driven by right-wing agitators and betray the ideals it has propagated for an anti-human migration policy. Human rights are non-negotiable!

We therefore call on the EU Commission not to sign a new version of the EU-Turkey deal.

**No more billions for human rights violations!
Stop the deportations to Turkey and elsewhere.**

Under the slogan "**No More EU Turkey Deal - Human Rights are Not For Sale**" we as an alliance therefore call for a decentralized day of action. Let's take our protest to the streets with creativity and fight together for change!