

Ombudsman asks Commission about fundamental rights protection in migration management centres

News - 13/07/2022

The Ombudsman has asked the Commission how it ensures fundamental rights are being respected in EU-funded migration centres in Greece.

The inquiry is in response to concerns raised by civil society organisations, as well as the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, about fundamental rights risks for refugees in the centres.

There are currently three centres - known as Multi-Purpose Reception and Identification Centres - housing hundreds of refugees on Greek islands. Two more are planned.

The Commission is involved in the construction and running of the centres as well as overseeing how Greece spends EU funds on them.

The Ombudsman has asked the Commission whether it replied to concerns raised by the Fundamental Rights Agency, whether there has been a fundamental rights impact assessments of the centres since they were created, and whether it has considered more dignified alternatives for the registration of refugees. The Ombudsman also asked which EU funding programmes were used to finance surveillance systems in the centre.

The inquiry is part of the Ombudsman's overall monitoring of fundamental rights issues. Other examples include the recent inquiries into how Frontex upholds its fundamental rights obligations, and into how the Commission ensures that the Croatian authorities respect fundamental rights in border management operations.