

EU interior ministers intensify attacks on refugees

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The ongoing assault against migrants and refugees serves as a lever for capitalist governments to eliminate democratic rights, suspend basic human rights, and establish dictatorship. This applies to both the United States and the European Union.

Under Donald Trump, masked immigration officials—the so-called “ICE Gestapo”—are terrorizing entire communities. They are arresting people who have lived in the United States for years or decades and deporting them to concentration camps at home and abroad from which there is no escape.

The EU is no less committed than the United States in this respect. For years, European borders have been sealed off, refugees illegally turned back, imprisoned in inhumane camps, and deported to countries where they have no chance of survival. In the process the Mediterranean Sea has become the world’s deadliest refugee route, claiming the lives of tens of thousands in the course of the past decade.

On Tuesday, the interior ministers of the EU member states met in Copenhagen to discuss further tightening up migration and refugee policies. Since the meeting was informal, no official decisions were made, but the interior ministers agreed on basic issues:

The EU’s external borders is to be further sealed, and funding for the EU border agency Frontex tripled in the EU budget to a total of €34 billion.

Rejected asylum seekers are to be deported more quickly and in greater numbers, including to war zones such as Syria and Afghanistan.

Return centres are to be set up outside the EU’s borders, from which refugees will be deported with the assistance of Frontex without ever having set foot on EU soil.

Overall, border protection and deportations are to be better coordinated and tightened.

The EU’s tougher stance on migration is being fuelled

not least by the change of government in Germany, now ruled by a coalition of the Christian Democratic Union CDU, Christian Social Union CSU, and Social Democratic Party SPD. Germany is—in the words of the new Interior Minister, Alexander Dobrindt (CSU)—no longer the “braking cabin,” but rather the “locomotive.”

This is not strictly true, since Dobrindt’s predecessor, Nancy Faeser (SPD), had already significantly advanced the expansion of Fortress Europe. She had ensured the faster deportation of rejected asylum seekers, expanded the list of “safe countries of origin” to include Algeria, Tunisia, India, and Morocco, restricted family reunification, tightened European asylum law, and—in violation of the Schengen Agreement—introduced controls at the German border.

But Dobrindt has now gone much further. Barely in office, he deployed 3,000 additional federal police officers to tighten controls at the German border. In doing so, he violated existing law. Asylum seekers from so-called “safe third countries” were immediately deported without even being able to apply for asylum or residency.

In addition, the border controls led to freight traffic jams and prevented thousands of cross-border commuters from getting to work on time. This resulted in considerable tensions with France and Poland, which responded with countermeasures and their own controls of their borders with Germany.

Dobrindt has promised to turn “the migration wave into a migration turnaround” and earned himself the nickname of “Migration Sheriff” for his aggressive approach. Last Friday, he invited the EU Commissioner for Home Affairs and several European interior ministers to a “Migration Summit” on the Zugspitze, Germany’s highest mountain, to provide “important impetus for a tougher European migration policy.”

On Monday, Dobrindt, together with his Polish counterpart Tomasz Siemoniak, inspected the

190-kilometer-long, five-meter-high, barbed-wire, camera-secured fence that Poland erected along its border with Belarus to keep out refugees. It is guarded by 11,000 soldiers and border guards and cost over 600 million euros.

At the end of June, after the Israeli attack on Iran, Dobrindt was also the first leading international politician to visit Israel and demonstratively expressed his solidarity with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, whom he would be legally obliged to arrest if Netanyahu visited Germany, following the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court.

It was no coincidence that Dobrindt was chosen as Interior Minister by the CDU/CSU/SPD coalition. He is known as an unscrupulous, chauvinistic agitator and could just as easily be a member of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD).

Ten years ago, as Transport Minister under Angela Merkel, he pushed through the “foreigner toll,” which the CSU had placed at the center of its election campaign. A toll was to be levied exclusively for foreigners on German highways. Since this was incompatible with EU law, Dobrindt proposed a toll for everyone, for which German drivers would then be compensated by abolishing vehicle tax.

Economically, the toll made absolutely no sense, as the revenue barely covered the costs of its collection. It served solely to fuel xenophobic sentiment. Ultimately, it was overturned by the European Court of Justice, and the federal budget was left with losses of €243 million.

Even with his latest anti-migrant rhetoric, Dobrindt isn’t simply trying to limit immigration. The number of asylum applications for Germany had already fallen under the previous government by 30 percent year-on-year in 2024,. Many refugees from Syria and other countries currently work in logistics, healthcare, industry, and other sectors, where they are urgently needed.

The incitement against refugees and migrants serves to divide the population and divert growing anger over social cuts, falling wages, and a lack of housing onto the most vulnerable members of society. Refugees who had to flee their homes from wars instigated by NATO are being blamed for a social crisis that is, in reality, the result of rising military spending and the insatiable greed of the super-rich.

The Merz government’s program to make Germany “ready for war” and transform the country into Europe’s strongest military power is incompatible with basic human rights and social concessions. The crimes this

government is capable of are demonstrated not only by its continued support for the genocide of the Palestinians in Gaza, but also by its conduct with regard to EU refugee policy.

Unspeakable conditions prevail in Greece, where the construction of concentration camp-like deportation centers is well underway. The minister responsible for migration, Makis Voridis, and his successor, Thanos Plevris, both defected from the far-right LAOS party to New Democracy, the sister party of the CDU-CSU, which forms the government in Greece.

A reporter for the British *Daily Mail* recently visited one of these camps, a warehouse on Crete where 400 migrants were crammed together. Her description speaks for itself:

The smell of unwashed men and urine inside the camp clouded my eyes. As we entered, the migrants cried for help and raised their hands to show ten fingers, the number of days they had been imprisoned there.

The atmosphere was like a powder keg, and the conditions were, to say the least, intolerable. Some migrants lay on mattresses which they had to share because there were so few. For the unfortunate ones, it was a concrete floor with a T-shirt as a pillow.

They are being treated worse than animals. This is the fate that the capitalist governments in Europe and the US have in store for anyone who stands in the way of their plans for war and further enrichment of the already wealthy.



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