



CYPRUS: SUBMISSION TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

**ISSUES RELATED TO THE DETENTION
OF MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND
ASYLUM SEEKERS**

SUBMITTED: MARCH 2026

ABOUT THE GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT (GDP)

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is committed to ending arbitrary and harmful migration-related detention practices around the world, and to ensuring respect for the fundamental human rights of all migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. To achieve this, we seek to:

- Increase public knowledge and awareness of immigration detention policies.
- Expand coverage of immigration detention by human rights monitoring bodies and other international agencies.
- Expand partnerships with local and international civil society organisations working to end arbitrary and harmful immigration detention practices.
- Strategically target research and advocacy so that it effectively challenges arbitrary and harmful detention laws and policies.

Cyprus: Issued Related to the Detention of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers-and Other Rights Abuses Against These Populations

Submission to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (117th Session, April-May 2026)

Submitted in March 2026

The [Global Detention Project \(GDP\)](#) welcomes the opportunity to provide information relevant to the review of Cyprus' twenty-fifth periodic report during the 117th session of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

This submission focuses on Cyprus' detention of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers for reasons related to their immigration status, as well as the country's broader border policies. An important consideration for making this submission has been the Committee's position on immigration detention and border policies, laid out in its Joint General Recommendation (No.39/No.8) issued with the UN Committee on Migrant Workers (2025).¹ In particular, we highlight the following:

"The Committees recall that immigration detention is always harmful and disproportionate as an interim measure during administrative procedures or in response to an administrative irregularity or infraction. The Committees strongly recommend that States Parties take all appropriate measures without delay to progressively abolish migration-related detention policies and practices."

1. CONTEXT: FOCUS ON RETURNS

For many years, Cyprus has had the largest number of asylum applications per capita across the EU: in 2023, approximately 13,000 applications were lodged per 1 million inhabitants—compared to less than 130 per 1 million inhabitants in Hungary, Slovakia, and Czechia.² While irregular arrival numbers have decreased more recently—largely the result of the fall of the Assad regime and the drop in numbers of Syrian refugees—in 2025 the European Commission's *Annual Asylum and Migration Report* nevertheless described the country as one facing "migratory pressure."³

¹ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Joint General Recommendation No. 39 (2025) of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and General Comment No. 8 (2025) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families on Thematic Guidelines for Eradicating Xenophobia Towards Migrants and Others Perceived as Such, CERC/C/GC/39-CMW/C/GC/8, 3 February 2026, <https://docs.un.org/en/CMW/C/GC/8>

² European Union Agency for Asylum, "3.1.4.1. Asylum Applications per Capita," *Asylum Report 2024*, <https://www.euaa.europa.eu/asylum-report-2024/3141-asylum-applications-capita>

³ European Commission, "The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2025)," 11 November 2025, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15196-2025-INIT/en/pdf>

In response, authorities have stepped up their efforts to return non-nationals to their countries of origin: from 9,699 (forced and voluntary) returns in 2023, to 11,400 in 2025.⁴ According to the European Commission, amongst EU Members States, Cyprus issued the most orders to leave relative to its GDP and population between July 2024 and June 2025.⁵

To enable increased returns, the country has introduced various legislative changes. In December 2025, it passed a new bill amending the *Refugee Law*, which provides that persons granted asylum in Cyprus will lose their protection status if they commit crimes⁶—making it easier for authorities to remove them from the country. In January 2026, it also approved an amendment to the *Law on the Establishment and Operation of the Administrative Court for International Protection*, reducing the time limits for appeals against rejected asylum applications, from 30 to 20 days.⁷ Also in January, the Administrative Court of International Protection issued a series of judgements in which it upheld the rejection of several Syrians’ asylum claims, ruling that the applicants no longer fulfilled the requirements of the *Refugee Law* or the *Geneva Convention* in light of recent developments in Syria.⁸ The Court’s rulings enable authorities to proceed with the applicants’ forced removals, and paves the way for future removals. (UNHCR, however, continues to advise against forced returns to Syria.⁹)

2. IMMIGRATION DETENTION POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Cyprus’ emphasis on increasing returns has been accompanied by continuing reliance upon immigration detention. The country operates one dedicated immigration detention facility—the [Menoyia Immigration Detention Centre](#) in Larnaca District—as well as short term holding facilities in [Larnaca](#) and [Paphos](#) Airports.

As of March 2026, authorities are in the process of opening a new pre-removal facility, the Limnes Migrant Centre, near to Menoyia. According to reports, the facility will be composed of both accommodation units for asylum seekers, as well as a closed detention facility—with the site intended to replace Menoyia (which will instead be used as a criminal facility¹⁰). Work began on the facility in 2023, with funding from the EU’s Asylum, Migration and

⁴ Cyprus Mail, “Returns of Irregular Migrants up 53 Per Cent Over Three Years,” 20 December 2025, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2025/12/20/returns-of-irregular-migrants-up-53-per-cent-over-three-years>

⁵ European Commission, “The European Annual Asylum and Migration Report (2025),” 11 November 2025, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15196-2025-INIT/en/pdf>

⁶ Sigma Live, “Parliament Passes Asylum Seekers Deportation Law Amid Tensions,” 5 December 2025, <https://en.sigmalive.com/parliament-passes-asylum-seekers-deportation-law-amid-tensions/>

⁷ Cyprus Mail, “Parliament Tightens Asylum Appeal Deadlines for Migrants,” 29 January 2026, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2026/01/29/parliament-tightens-asylum-appeal-deadlines-for-migrants>

⁸ Sigma Live, “Δικαστική απόφαση για υποχρεωτικές επιστροφές Σύρων αιτητών ασύλου,” 29 January 2026, <https://www.sigmalive.com/news/politics/1301848/dikastiki-apofasi-ghia-ipokhreitikes-epistrofes-syron-aititwn-asyloy>

⁹ UNHCR, “UNHCR Observations on Restoring Order and Control: A Statement of the UK Government’s Asylum and Returns Police,” 31 December 2025, https://www.unhcr.org/uk/sites/uk/files/2026-01/UNHCR%20Observations%20On%20UK%20Asylum%20Statement%20%27Restoring%20Order%20and%20Control%27_0.pdf

¹⁰ In Cyprus, “Prison Chief Shifts Juvenile Detention Plans to Tackle Overcrowding,” 7 February 2026, <https://in-cyprus.philenews.com/local/cyprus-prison-overcrowding-juvenile-unit-plans-changed/>

Integration Fund, and in February 2026 local media reported that the first phase had been completed, with the final phase due for completion in September 2026.¹¹

As well as facilities dedicated to the detention of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, non-nationals are also held in police holding cells, and continue to be de facto detained at the [Pournara Reception Centre](#), which functions as an ad hoc detention facility (*see sections 2.1 and 2.2 below*).

Migration-related detention in Cyprus is set out in both the *Aliens and Immigration Law* and the *Refugee Law*. According to the *Aliens and Immigration Law*, anyone declared a “prohibited immigrant” can be detained pending removal (Article 14). Article 6(1) provides 13 instances in which someone may be declared a “prohibited immigrant.” The law also provides for the possibility of detaining a non-national in return procedures to prepare their return (Article 18PST).¹² The maximum length for detention is 18 months (6 months, with the option of extending by an additional 12 months) (Articles 18PST (7) and (8)).

Article 19(2) of the *Aliens and Immigration Law* also provides that a prohibited immigrant who is apprehended in Cyprus is guilty of a criminal offence and liable to imprisonment for up to ten years and/or a fine of up to 50,000 EUR.

According to the *Refugee Law*,¹³ meanwhile, “the detention of an applicant solely on the basis of his/her status as an applicant ... is prohibited.” The law nevertheless permits the detention of asylum seekers in certain situations, reflecting conditions laid out in the EU Reception Conditions Directive. The law also includes provisions for the detention of asylum applicants under the Dublin procedure, specifying circumstances which may reveal a risk of absconding (which constitutes a ground for detention). According to the Cyprus Refugee Council, “when a person that is already detained applies for asylum, a new detention order is issued under the *Refugee Law* under the presumption that the person is submitting the application for international protection merely in order to delay or frustrate the enforcement of the return decision.”¹⁴ Under the *Refugee Law*, there is no time limit for detention.

The GDP encourages the committee to urge Cyprus to amend the *Aliens and Immigration Law* to decriminalise irregular entry and stay, in line with both the Committee’s General Recommendation (paragraph 38 of which states “The Committees reaffirm the principle of non-criminalization of irregular migration. The irregular entry, transit or stay of migrants cannot be considered a crime”) and recommendations issued by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (“The irregular entry and stay in a country by migrants should not be treated as a criminal offence, and the criminalization of irregular migration will therefore always exceed the legitimate interests of States in protecting their territories and regulating irregular migration flows”¹⁵) Cyprus should also amend its *Refugee Law* to ensure that

¹¹ Cyprus Mail, “First Phase of Limnes Migrant Centre Complete Amid Local Concerns,” 6 February 2026, <https://cyprus-mail.com/2026/02/06/first-phase-of-limnes-migrant-centre-complete-amid-local-concerns>

¹² Republic of Cyprus, “The Aliens and Immigration Law,” https://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/0_105/full.html

¹³ Republic of Cyprus, “The Refugee Law of 2000,” https://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/enop/non-ind/2000_1_6/full.html

¹⁴ Cyprus Refugee Council, “Cyprus, Duration of Detention,” accessed 9 March 2025, <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/detention-asylum-seekers/legal-framework-detention/duration-detention/>

¹⁵ UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, “Revised Deliberation No.5 on Deprivation of Liberty of Migrants,” 7 February 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unwgad/2018/en/120413>

asylum seekers are not detained during protection procedures, similarly in-line with recommendations issued by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention.¹⁶

2.1 Detention in Police Holding Cells

Despite years of criticism from monitoring bodies like the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT),¹⁷ Cyprus continues to detain non-nationals in police holding cells across the island. In 2024, 24 police cells were used, with a total capacity of 197 persons.¹⁸ Out of the 24 cells, only ten have outdoor areas, and conditions in general are reported to be “sub-standard”—including complaints regarding hygiene and cleanliness, limited access to information, lack of recreational activities, and lack of access to natural light.¹⁹ In 2024, an Ombudsman visit to Limassol police holding centre found a host of conditions concerns, noting in particular concerns regarding lighting and ventilation in the cells in which non-nationals were held.²⁰ The same concerns were again flagged during an unannounced follow-up visit in 2025.²¹

Although Cypriot authorities informed the CPT following a 2017 visit that instructions had been issued by the Chief of Police that immigration detainees in police cells must be transferred to the Menoyia Detention Centre, unless they were to be deported within 48 hours (and detention for longer than this would only be permitted in exceptional cases, with permission from the Assistance Chief of Police), during its 2023 visit, the CPT noted that non-nationals continued to be held for longer than 48 hours under immigration legislation in these facilities. “The examination of custody records showed that some lengths of stay were excessive, and varied from days, weeks, months and in rare occasions could even last for more than one year.”²²

Conditions in these facilities are wholly inappropriate for migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking detainees. [Recalling the Committee’s Joint General Recommendation \(No.39/No.8\) with the UN Committee on Migrant Workers, which states that “\[States Parties\] should take](#)

¹⁶ UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, “Revised Deliberation No.5 on Deprivation of Liberty of Migrants,” 7 February 2018, <https://www.refworld.org/legal/resolution/unwgad/2018/en/120413>

¹⁷ Dating as far back as the mid-1990s, the CPT has long criticised Cyprus for its use of non-specialised facilities for immigration detention, which eventually helped spur the country to build a dedicated immigration detention facility. See: CPT, “Report to the Government of Cyprus on the Visit to Cyprus Carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 12 to 21 May 1996,” 22 May 1997, <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680695595>

¹⁸ Cyprus Refugee Council, “Cyprus, General,” accessed 9 March 2026, <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/detention-asylum-seekers/general/>

¹⁹ Cyprus Refugee Council, “Cyprus, Conditions in Detention Facilities,” accessed 9 March 2026, https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/detention-asylum-seekers/detention-conditions/conditions-detention-facilities/#_ftn14

²⁰ National Prevention Mechanism, “Report Regarding a Visit to the Police Detention Center in Limassol Conducted on March 26, 2024,” 9 April 2024, <https://www.ombudsman.gov.cy/ombudsman/ombudsman.nsf/All/6A4CD3944AE1FD51C2258B010036A49F?%24file/NPM%20Visit%20at%20the%20Police%20Station%20Lim%20ENG.docx.pdf>

²¹ National Prevention Mechanism, “Report of the Visit Carried Out to the Limassol Police Detentions on 25 April 2025,” 5 September 2025, <https://tinyurl.com/msjmmrh4>

²² European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, “Report to the Government of Cyprus on the Visit to Cyprus Carried Out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 9 to 17 May 2023,” CPT/Inf (2024) 18, 17 May 2024, <https://rm.coe.int/1680afb22c>

adequate measures to guarantee that the facilities and all conditions of migration-related detention are entirely different from those of the criminal system,” the Global Detention Project urges the Committee to reiterate the CPT’s 2023 recommendation that Cypriot authorities ensure that non-nationals are not held in police establishments under immigration legislation for more than 24 hours.

2.2 De Facto Detention

Cyprus continues to de facto detain asylum seekers in the Pournara Centre, which functions as an ad-hoc immigration detention facility despite its official description as a “Reception Centre.”²³ According to the government’s Asylum Service website, “all individuals entering the Republic irregularly for public safety and health purposes are referred for the execution of standard operating procedures (fingerprinting, investigative checks, medical examinations for communicable diseases, etc).”²⁴

Asylum seekers are not permitted to leave the centre until the compulsory assessments are completed and a proof of their future address has been shared with the Asylum Service—without being given a detention order or the ability to challenge their detention. Following a 2025 visit to the facility, the CPT noted that: “the delegation found that foreign nationals continued to be deprived of their liberty in Pournara without a formal decision and without access to the consequent applicable safeguards. Such a situation may amount to arbitrary deprivation of liberty and, given that detention could last for an undefined period of time lasting from a few weeks to several months, this left detained persons in a state of uncertainty.”²⁵ At the time of the Committee’s visit, 290 foreign nationals were deprived of their liberty in the centre.

During a January 2026 visit, the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights similarly noted that “residents remain de facto deprived of their liberty without receiving a detention order.”²⁶

Although conditions have improved at Pournara in recent years, with tents replaced with prefabricated units, a refurbishment underway, and increased healthcare staffing, observers including the CPT have nevertheless continued to flag various concerns. These include the presence of cockroaches, a lack of recreational and educational activities, inadequate clothing provision, and lack of mental healthcare services.²⁷

The GDP therefore encourages the Committee to demand that the State Party immediately cease the de facto detention of non-nationals in Pournara. The Committee should also remind Cyprus that immigration detention must only be used as a measure of last resort, where it is necessary and proportionate, and based on an individual assessment. All persons

²³ Asylum Service, “First Reception Center Pournara in Kokkinotrimithia,” accessed 10 March 2026, <https://www.mip.gov.cy/mip/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/All/5BCEA8131FE27233C2258ADA002E8CBA?OpenDocument>

²⁴ Asylum Service, “First Reception Center Pournara in Kokkinotrimithia,” accessed 10 March 2026, <https://www.mip.gov.cy/mip/asylum/asylumservice.nsf/All/5BCEA8131FE27233C2258ADA002E8CBA?OpenDocument>

²⁵ European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, “Visit Report, Cyprus, April 2025,” 10 December 2025, <https://rm.coe.int/488029b2a8>

²⁶ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, “FRA Director Visits First Reception Center in Pournara,” 30 January 2026, <https://fra.europa.eu/en/news/2026/fra-director-visits-first-reception-centre-pournara>

²⁷ European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, “Visit Report, Cyprus, April 2025,” 10 December 2025, <https://rm.coe.int/488029b2a8>

subjected to immigration-related detention measures must be provided with a detention order, and be guaranteed effective access to justice.

The Global Detention Project has also documented allegations of de facto detention during pushback operations. Between May and November 2024, migrants who crossed the Green Line into government-controlled areas to seek asylum were denied access to asylum procedures and instead pushed back into the Buffer Zone, where they remained stranded for months. Reports indicate that Cypriot authorities pushed asylum seekers back into the Buffer Zone on multiple occasions, despite their communicating their intent to apply for asylum.²⁸ According to a report by the UN Secretary General to the Security Council, 142 asylum seekers—including 35 children, some as young as nine months—were stranded in the buffer zone.²⁹

The Border Violence Monitoring Network (BVMN) described the group as “trapped,” with police “patrolling day and night” to prevent them from entering Cyprus.³⁰ KISA, Euromed Rights, and the Centre d’Etudes en Sciences Sociales sur les Mondes Africains, Américains et Asiatiques (CESSMA) also note that “Once people have entered the Buffer Zone from areas in the north not under the control of the ROC, a return to the north is often not an option, as there is no asylum system in place in those areas. Instead, individuals risk being arrested and returned to Turkiye, where they may be forcibly returned to their country of origin.”³¹ Thus, the group were unable to enter Cyprus, but also unable to leave safely, effectively confining them to the Buffer Zone.

In June 2025, some of the asylum seekers took their case to the European Court of Human Rights (*Z.A and Others v. Cyprus*³²), accusing Cyprus of pushbacks, obstructing access to asylum, violence, degrading treatment, and unlawful detention. Not only do the applicants complain of the conditions they were forced to live in when trapped in the Buffer Zone (“without shelter, food or medical attention”), and violent pushbacks into the Buffer Zone, but some also allege that they were arbitrarily detained in a dark room without food or water and threatened with violence during pushback operations:

“Reference is made to the applicants complaint that they were arbitrarily detained, whether in a police car or in a warehouse, without receiving any formal communication as to the grounds of their detention or its length, nor did they have available remedies to contest it.”³³

²⁸ Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants, et al, “Communication CYP/3,” 23 July 2024, <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gld=29206>

²⁹ United Nations Security Council, “United Nations Operation in Cyprus, Report of the Secretary-General, S/2025/6,” 3 January 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/s/2025/6>

³⁰ Border Violence Monitoring Network, “Monthly Report June 2024: Illegal Pushbacks and Border Violence Reports,” June 2024, <https://humanrightsobservers.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/BVMN-Monthly-Report-June-2024.pdf.pdf>

³¹ KISA, Euromed Rights, and the Centre d’Etudes en Sciences Sociales sur les Mondes Africains, Américains et Asiatiques (CESSMA), “Submission Pursuant to Rule 9.2 of the Committee of Ministers’ Rules for the Supervision of the Execution of Judgements, on the Implementation of M.A. and Z.R. v Cyprus (Application No 39090/20),” 23 January 2026.

³² European Court of Human Rights, “*Z.A and Others Against Cyprus and E.A and Others Against Cyprus*,” 30 June 2025, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-244112%22%5D%7D>

³³ European Court of Human Rights, “*Z.A and Others Against Cyprus and E.A and Others Against Cyprus*,” 30 June 2025, <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-244112%22%5D%7D>

The State Party should therefore be encouraged to ensure that all persons seeking asylum in the Republic of Cyprus be guaranteed access to asylum procedures and adequate reception systems. The practice of forced pushbacks into the Buffer Zone, where asylum seekers face numerous grave risks including movement restrictions that amount to de-facto detention, must be halted immediately. The Committee will recall paragraph 47 of its Joint General Recommendation (No.39/No.8) with the UN Committee on Migrant Workers in which it states: “Collective expulsion and pushback must be prohibited, as has been evidenced by both Committee and by several other United Nations human rights mechanisms. Such measures violate the right to individual assessment of protection needs, the principle of non-refoulement, the right to seek asylum and the duty to ensure due process guarantees.”

2.3 Detention of Children

While the *Refugee Law* explicitly states that child asylum seekers cannot be detained (Article 9F(1)), the *Asylum and Immigration Law* does not forbid their detention. Instead, Article 18PI(1) mirrors the EU Returns Directive, stating that “Unaccompanied minors and families with minors shall be detained only as a last resort and for the minimum period of time required.”

While the Cyprus Refugee Council reports that “in practice, children are not detained,”³⁴ the de facto detention of children in Pournara Reception Centre has been reported by observers. At the time of the CPT’s visit in April 2025, 25 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) were held in the centre—20 boys and five girls—one of whom had been held for 77 days. As noted above in section 2.2, the facility lacks educational and recreational activities, and the CPT notes that “Many UASC interviewed by the delegation expressed feeling frustrated, stressed and despondent.”³⁵

In line with the Committee’s Joint General Recommendation No.39, in which it holds that “States Parties should immediately forbid and cease in practice the migration-related detention of children, including unaccompanied minors and families,” we encourage the Committee to call on Cyprus to amend the *Asylum and Immigration Law* to expressly forbid the detention of all children for reasons related to their migration-status. Authorities must also immediately cease the de facto detention of children in Pournara Reception Centre, and ensure that they are instead referred to appropriate social services.

2.4 Prison-Like Conditions at Menoyia Detention Centre

Observers have continued to note that conditions at Menoyia Immigration Detention Centre are “prison-like.” In 2013, 2017, and 2023, the CPT criticised the fact that the centre’s infrastructure gave it a carceral environment—such as the existence of a high-security fence surrounding the centre, heavy metal shuttered slats on windows, heavy cell doors, tables and stools fixed to the floor, and lack of decoration.³⁶ The Cyprus Refugee Council also

³⁴ Cyprus Refugee Council, “Cyprus: Detention of Vulnerable Applicants,” accessed 10 March 2025, <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/detention-asylum-seekers/legal-framework-detention/detention-vulnerable-applicants/>

³⁵ European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, “Visit Report, Cyprus, April 2025,” 10 December 2025, <https://rm.coe.int/488029b2a8>

³⁶ European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, “Report to the Government of Cyprus on the Visit to Cyprus Carried Out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (CPT) from 9 to 17 May 2023,” 17 May 2024, <https://rm.coe.int/1680afb22c>

reports that the facility is managed by the police, and that police officers serve as the facility's guards.³⁷

Given that Cypriot authorities are in the process of opening a new pre-removal detention facility (the Limnes Migrant Centre) which is intended to replace Menoyia, the GDP believes it imperative that the Committee remind the State Party of the need to ensure that detention conditions in the new facility do not replicate those in Menoyia and are not carceral in nature. Instead, Limnes must ensure appropriate conditions that comply with international standards and reflect its administrative—not punitive—role.

3. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the above information, the Global Detention Project encourages the Committee to issue the following recommendations:

3.a Ensure that immigration detention is only used as a measure of last resort, where strictly necessary and proportionate, and based on individual assessment. All persons subjected to immigration-related detention measures must be provided with a detention order and be guaranteed access to justice.

3.b Immediately cease the de-facto detention of non-nationals in Pournara Reception Centre.

3.c Amend the *Aliens and Immigration Law* to decriminalise irregular entry and stay, and to forbid the detention of all children for reasons related to their migration-status.

3.d Amend the *Refugee Law* to ensure that asylum seekers are not detained during asylum procedures.

3.e Ensure that non-nationals are not held in police establishments under immigration legislation for more than 24 hours.

3.f Ensure that detention conditions in the new Limnes Migrant Centre are not carceral in nature. Instead, the new facility must reflect its administrative—not punitive—role, and ensure conditions that comply with international standards.

3.g Ensure that all persons seeking asylum in the Republic of Cyprus are guaranteed unhindered access to asylum procedures and appropriate reception systems.

3.h Halt the practice of forced pushbacks into the Buffer Zone, where asylum seekers face numerous grave risks including movement restrictions amounting to de-facto detention.

³⁷ Cyprus Refugee Council, "Cyprus: Conditions in Detention Facilities," accessed 10 March 2026, <https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/detention-asylum-seekers/detention-conditions/conditions-detention-facilities/>