



THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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European Parliament vote on return policies raises serious concerns about the EU's commitment to its fundamental values

The Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), on Friday, 27 March 2026, expresses its deep concern following the [recent vote of the European Parliament](#) on new EU return policies in the field of migration.

This vote signals a troubling political shift within the Parliament, enabling the emergence of new majorities on issues of fundamental importance. Such developments risk reshaping the European Union's approach to key areas, including migration and the protection of our common home, in ways that may depart from its foundational values.

COMECE is particularly alarmed by the potential consequences of the adopted position for the dignity and fundamental rights of vulnerable persons. Measures that facilitate returns, expand detention, or externalise responsibilities to third countries raise serious questions about the effective safeguarding of human rights and respect for the dignity of every human person.

The European project has always been rooted in principles of solidarity, human fraternity, and the protection of the most vulnerable. These principles are not optional; they are at the heart of the Union's identity. Any policy development that risks undermining them calls for careful reflection and renewed commitment.

This vote therefore highlights a deeper concern: a possible crisis of identity within the European Union. At a time of global uncertainty, Europe is called not to retreat from its values, but to reaffirm them with clarity and courage.

COMECE urges the European Union and its Member States, in the forthcoming negotiations, to ensure that migration policies remain firmly anchored in respect for human dignity, fundamental rights, and the Union's founding values.

The Church in the European Union remains committed to contributing constructively to this debate, advocating for policies that uphold both justice and compassion.

COMECE will hold its next General Assembly in Cyprus in mid-April 2026, where migration and asylum will be among the main topics of discussion. On this occasion, the Bishops of the European Union will reflect on recent developments and discern appropriate actions in response to this issue, which is a matter of major concern for the Church in the European Union at the present time.