



## Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (F.Y.R.O.M.) A safe country ?

No country can be deemed « safe ». That is the spirit of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees which provides for the individual examination of each asylum claim: each personal situation is unique. To label a country as a “safe country of origin” suggests that there is no general risk of persecution and that the state of law is respected. A “safe” country can also be categorised as a “safe third country” where asylum-seekers who have transited through the said country may be returned there because their asylum procedures is in line with international and European refugee law standards. Many examples show that human rights standards are often not met.

The notion of safety as an examination tool can have dire consequences on asylum-seekers’ rights (see policy brief Safe country of origin): accelerated procedures, non suspensive appeals i.e. removal before a final decision is made, claim likely to be rejected if not inadmissible in the case of “safe third” countries.

The European Union is discussing a draft Regulation establishing an EU common list of safe countries of origin comprising, inter alia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia which, to date, is only listed by 9 Member states out of the 12 existing national lists of safe countries of origin (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United-Kingdom).

**The AEDH, EuroMed Rights and the FIDH are opposed to the notion of « safety » which is usually used as a means to remove people in a country where they, allegedly, would not be at risk: is that really the case?**

### FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OPINION

- **Attacks** and threats experienced by independent journalists
- **Surveillance** of at least 2000 journalists by the Government according to Amnesty international

### TORTURE AND DETENTION CONDITIONS

- Some testimonies indicate **practices of torture and ill-treatment** by security forces, in particular by the special urban police (« Alfi »)
- **Poor conditions of detention**

### MINORITIES AND VULNERABLE GROUPS

- **Threats, attacks and hate crimes perpetrated against LGBTI persons.** These attacks are generally not effectively investigated and are usually not denounced publicly by the authorities
- **Discrimination against women** who are not adequately protected against this violence
- **Discrimination against ethnic minorities** such as Roma people and restriction of their freedom of movement through racial profiling practices at the border
- **Inadequate protection provided by the asylum system to refugees and asylum seekers.** Furthermore, they are facing discrimination and ill-treatments by security forces or militias

## FURTHER INFORMATION

AEDH, EuroMed Rights, FIDH, "Safe countries : a denial of the right of asylum", May 2016  
<http://euromedrights.org/analysis-safecountries-en/>

Shadow report of the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights of the Republic of Macedonia (MHC) on the human rights situation in the country (2015) [\[ENG\]](#)

Amnesty International report (2015-2016)  
[\[ENG\]](#) [\[FR\]](#)

Compilation and summary of the UN High-Commissioner for Human Rights in the Universal Periodic Review (2014)  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/MKSession18.aspx>

Note of the European Roma Rights Centre (2014)  
[\[ENG\]](#)



EuroMed Rights  
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