

Now Italy is even banning its OWN ships from docking if they have rescued migrants

ITALY has refused to allow a commercial vessel flying an Italian flag to bring ashore rescued migrants, apparently keeping up a hardline policy on new arrivals as it presses European allies to share the burden of hosting an influx of displaced people.

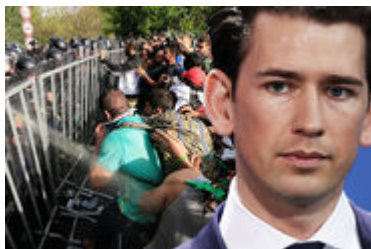
A commercial ship that supplies oil platforms off the coast of Libya pulled 66 migrants to safety on Monday, but it was told not to bring them to Italy, an Interior Ministry source said.

Transport Minister Danilo Toninelli said the migrants had been transferred to an Italian coast guard vessel on Tuesday.

They will be brought to Italy, one source said, though the interior ministry source would not confirm.

The commercial ship picked up the migrants though it had been told Libyan patrol boats were coming to retrieve them, the interior ministry source said.

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The move comes two days before a meeting of European interior ministers in the Austrian city of Innsbruck, where German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer wants his far-right Italian counterpart Matteo Salvini to agree to take back migrants who arrive at its borders from Italy.

“What is certain is that for Italy there is no plan to take back who has gone abroad. It’s the last thing that could happen,” Sr Salvini said in an interview with *Il Messaggero*.

“If the Germans and the Austrians are thinking only about sending migrants back to us, helping us close the external borders first would be a step forward,” he said.

Chancellor Angela Merkel’s government teetered on the brink of collapse last week as Seehofer’s Bavarian conservatives demanded a unilateral tightening of German border controls that she was prepared to concede only in the framework of a European agreement.

Italy’s new government, which took office on June 1, has helped thrust immigration back on to the European agenda by closing its ports to humanitarian ships that rescue migrants off the coast of Libya, and it has so far refused to accept migrants sent back from the German border.

More than 650,000 migrants, mostly from Africa and the Middle East, have been put out to sea on overcrowded boats by people smugglers since 2014.

Thousands have perished, but those rescued have been brought to Italy and many later headed north to other European countries.

Salvini has said charity rescue vessels flying foreign flags would not be allowed in Italian ports, and on Sunday he said ships participating in European border control and anti-trafficking missions should not bring rescued migrants to Italy.







In less than a month, three charity ships have ended up disembarking in Spain and Malta after Italy refused them safe haven.

“Our position is to block in any way possible the trafficking of human beings,” M5 Salvini told *Il Messaggero*. “We’ve done more than anyone else (to take in sea borne migrants). That’s enough. It’s someone else’s turn.”

Aid groups and UN agencies on Friday asked Italy open its ports to rescue ships because the policy could have a high human cost.

More migrants could die at sea or be trapped indefinitely in inhumane detention centres, they said.



Refugees who fled Libya wait on the quay after disembarking from a boat

Source: <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/986719/Italy-migrants-europe-refugees-bans-ships-from-docking-rescued-migrants>

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