
CRITICS BLAME GREEK COAST GUARD TACTICS FOR MIGRANT SEA INTERCEPTION THAT LEFT 15 DEAD

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Greek authorities are facing criticism for launching an interception operation rather than a rescue mission for the migrants stranded on a raft near a Greek island, which left more than a dozen people dead this week when their vessel collided with a high-speed patrol boat.

In total, 15 people were killed and another 24 injured (including 11 children) on Tuesday (3 February), after their inflatable raft was struck by the Greek coast guard vessel off the coast of Mersinidi in Vrontados, eastern Chios. Two members of the Hellenic Coast Guard were also transferred to the hospital with minor injuries.

Instead of a search-and-rescue operation, an interception operation was deployed from the outset by Coast Guard vessel PLS 1077, a high-speed patrol boat, according to Refugee Support Aegean, a Greek-based advocacy group, in an emailed statement on Wednesday (4 February).

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