

Question for written answer E-007812/2016
to the Commission
Rule 130
Notis Marias (ECR)

Subject: Immediate drastic reduction of refugee hosting space on the Aegean Islands and measures for decongesting the islands

According to official data, on 29 September 2016, 14 003 refugees and illegal immigrants were in the hotspots of the Aegean Islands, despite the fact that these sites only have space for up to 7 450 people.

As has been pointed out in our Questions E-007329/2016 and E-006374/2016 and acknowledged by the UN High Commissioner, the growing congestion in the above hotspots has led to tensions that threaten the safety of both inhabitants and guests.

However, the agreement resulting from the EU-Turkey meeting on 18 March 2016 provides, among other measures, for an increase in the short-term hosting space on the Aegean Islands from 6 000 to the excessive number of 20 000.

In view of this, and since decision 2015/1601 of the EU Council concerning the relocation has not been implemented at the desired pace, resulting in Greece facing huge congestion problem in the hosting structures:

1. Does the Commission insist on the creation of the above space for hosting 20 000 people on the Aegean islands?
2. What initiatives will it take, in cooperation with the Greek authorities, to relieve immediately the pressure in the hotspots on the Aegean Islands and thus restore the security of their inhabitants?