

**Question for written answer E-001399/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Lorenzo Fontana (ENF)

Subject: Concerns over the sale of Italian visas in Iraqi Kurdistan

On 28 February 2017, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs announced via a press release that it had ordered an inspection of the Italian consulate in Irbil with a view to checking whether its visa-issuing procedures were lawful. Following the inspection, it was discovered that excessive sums of money had been charged in exchange for issuing visas and, according to the press release, 'the head of the visa section has been dismissed'. It would seem that 152 people had obtained visas by paying far more than the standard fees in dubious transactions. Some of the applications appear to have already been refused for security reasons by the consulates of other Member States.

Given the ongoing threat of terrorists infiltrating the EU, can the Commission answer the following questions:

- How is the issuing of visas monitored? Is the issuing of visas coordinated at EU level?
- Have similar incidents occurred in the past?