

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4216/09
by Athanasios Plevris (EFD)
to the Commission

Subject: Illegal migration

The flow of migrants into the EU from Asian and African countries has turned into a raging torrent and the migratory pressure at the points of entry has become intolerable. The brunt of this problem is borne by southern EU countries (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Malta, Greece and Cyprus), but it is only a matter of time before it will spread to other European countries. It is exacerbated by countries which are known to allow, if not actually promote, this flow of migrants (for instance, Turkey) but also by the absence of a coordinated attempt by the EU to curb this illegal migration. Greece is severely affected by this phenomenon, and some areas of Athens (Omonia Square, Aghius Panteleimoneas, Kypseli, Metaxourgio, Plateia Attikis, Plateia Amerikis, etc.) and other major cities have been turned into ghettos for illegal migrants. Furthermore, the Greek islands opposite Turkey are unable to withstand this pressure of migration. The EU has not so far taken any serious measures to assist the Mediterranean countries.

In view of the above, will the Commission say:

1. How many illegal migrants live in the EU and how are they distributed proportionally between Member States?
2. What does it intend to do to assist those Mediterranean countries most affected by this phenomenon?
3. Does it intend to put pressure - as the EU, rather than individual Member States - on those countries which send migrants to take them back (repatriation), imposing clear sanctions on those which do not comply, rather than just uttering pious words?
4. Does it intend to decide on a proportional distribution of illegal migrants until they are redirected among EU countries in proportion to their population, thereby providing practical help to Mediterranean countries?
5. Does a plan exist for the above district of Athens where the problem is very apparent?