

**Question for written answer E-004772/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Smuggling of migrants with forged passports into the EU by gangs

On Crete, between 3 and 9 August 2020, the police arrested dozens of migrants with forged passports (49 men and 14 women) who were intending to travel onwards to western Europe (mainly Germany and Italy) ¹.

This is not an isolated incident: a gang of smugglers (10 men and one woman) were arrested back in 2016 ²; and in 2018 it was reported that a trafficking ring suspected of having smuggled more than 3000 migrants with forged passports into the EU had been broken up ³.

1. To what extent has the Commission responded to these crimes and can it step up its support for the Greek authorities in securing the external borders and combating people smuggling, including within the EU, especially as Crete is involved time and time again?
2. How many people have attempted to enter the EU with fake papers since 2016?
3. How, after their arrest, were the smugglers and the people seeking to enter the EU with fake papers obtained for them by the smugglers dealt with? Have there been convictions, jail sentences or deportations?

¹ https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/ausland/internationale-politik/id_88380388/griechenland-dutzende-migranten-mit-falschen-paessen-festgenommen-.html

² https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/id_79421388/schleuserbande-auf-kreta-hochgegangen.html

³ https://www.t-online.de/nachrichten/ausland/krisen/id_84393734/mehr-als-3-000-fluechtlinge-geschleust-polizei-auf-kreta-zerschlaegt-grossen-schleuserring.html