

**Question for written answer E-004284/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Jean-Paul Garraud (ID)

Subject: EU financing NGOs that are in collusion with migrant smugglers

On 30 August 2021, the German newspaper Die Welt published an article¹ presenting considerable evidence of collaboration between migrant smugglers and a number of NGOs.

Since 2017, Italian judicial authorities have launched 18 investigations into the involvement of NGO ship captains, crew members and staff in aiding and abetting illegal immigration.

In September 2020, as a result of an operation carried out by two Greek police officers who infiltrated groups of migrants travelling to Lesbos from Turkey, the Greek authorities accused a number of NGOs of forming a criminal organisation and facilitating migrant smuggling.

In March 2021, the Italian authorities brought charges of aiding and abetting illegal immigration against 21 individuals (crew members, team leaders and managers) working for the NGOs Médecins sans Frontières and Save the Children, based on evidence collected from tapped devices on the ship *Luventa* and provided by an investigator who worked undercover on the *Vos Hostia*.

According to the Financial Transparency System, between 2007 and 2016, these NGOs and their subsidiaries received EUR 173.61 million and EUR 52.13 million respectively from the EU.

Pending the outcome of these trials, to keep its hands clean, is the Commission considering putting a stop to the payment of funds to these NGOs?

¹ <https://www.welt.de/debatte/kommentare/plus233450974/Ermittlungen-Wie-Seenotretter-mit-Schleppern-zusammenarbeiten.html>