

WRITTEN QUESTION P-4068/00
by Karla Peijs (PPE-DE)
to the Council

Subject: Illegal emigration from the Schengen area to Britain

1. Is the Council aware that there is substantial illegal emigration from the Schengen area to Britain?
2. Is the Council aware that checks at the external frontiers in Calais, Zeebrugge and Hook of Holland in particular leave much to be desired since spot checks on lorry drivers have found hundreds of stowaways trying to leave the Schengen area, and many of these people have taken the opportunity of illegally entering the Schengen area?
3. Is the Council aware that with spot checks and, recently, checks on all freight at the Schengen external frontier, border checks are in fact being carried out by private firms and not by the competent authorities?
4. Is the Council aware that stowaways stopped by private firms and handed over to the competent authorities are released by those authorities so that they can 'go underground' again and make a fresh attempt to cross to Britain?
5. Does the Council agree that frontier checks should be carried out by the competent authorities and not by private individuals?
6. What action does the Council intend to take to put an end to this situation?
7. What action does the Council intend to take to compensate lorry drivers who, for no fault of their own, fall victim to the UK's highly inflexible Immigration and Asylum Act (of 3 April 2000) and the unworkable Code of Conduct which is part of that act?