

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0304/04  
by Pietro-Paolo Mennea (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Prison guards

Various press reports and reports from the department concerned have highlighted the difficulties currently facing the Italian prison guards' service.

In accordance with staffing provisions laid down by former Minister Fassino (Ministerial Decree of 8 February 2001) this service is currently estimated to comprise 45 000 men and women in more than 200 prison establishments in Italy, including 12 in Puglia, with a total staff of 2 850 officers, which means 500 fewer than requirements for a prison population of 3 800, of whom many are terrorists, or members of the Mafia or other organised crime networks.

Despite this precarious situation, the Minister of Justice, Roberto Castelli, has decided, as part of new personnel plans, to transfer some 300 units provisionally from the south to the north of Italy, including 77 officers from Puglia, without even providing for mission expenses, other than a tiny allowance of EUR 12 per day.

It is well known that international organised crime and the activities of Albanian mafia groups are constantly increasing in the south of Italy. This transfer of prison personnel has therefore given rise to serious concern, which has been voiced by the OSAPP trade union.

In view of the above, does the Commission intend to take action to ensure that this situation does not adversely affect the internal security of prisons in Italy, law and order, and the quality of life of prison personnel and their families?