

## Migration: MEPs call for more EU solidarity on visit to reception centres in Sicily

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Countries such as Italy and Greece dealing with an influx of asylum seekers should receive more support from other member states, MEPs said on a delegation visit to the Italian island of Sicily from 22 to 24 July. "Italy spends over €1 billion every year just to take care of those who make it across the Mediterranean. Italy's borders are the EU's borders and a better management of the migratory flows is our common responsibility," said French ALDE member Jean Arthuis, co-chair of the delegation.

The other co-chair of the delegation, Bulgarian S&D member Iliana Iotova, expressed her disappointment with the results of the meeting of EU home affairs ministers on 20 July, when member states agreed to take about 32,000 asylum seekers from Italy and Greece over two years, rather than 40,000 as proposed by the European Commission. "What we see is an endemic lack of solidarity among EU member states," she said. "Countries such as Italy, Greece, Malta and Bulgaria are left alone dealing with a global problem."

On 16 July Parliament's civil liberties committee had approved the Commission plans for a binding emergency redistribution of at least 40,000 asylum seekers across the EU. MEPs have been pushing for a stronger common asylum policy and binding quotas for EU member states to take in asylum seekers.

Members from the budgets and civil liberties committees visited the reception centres for asylum seekers in Pozzallo and Mineo and met Italian government and local officials as well as representatives from NGOs, EU border agency Frontex and the European Asylum Support Office.

### Find out more

- Statements on Sicily visit: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150722IPR84609/html/Statements-by-the-co-chairs-of-the-delegation-to-Sicily-on-migration>
- Videos and photos from the delegation visit to Sicily: <http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Page.aspx?id=2295>
- Plenary debate on migration (20 May): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150519STO56415/html/Migration-MEPs-debate-EU-response>
- Video: interview on the proposed emergency refugee relocation mechanism (16 July): <http://europartv.europa.eu/en/player.aspx?pid=4e014893-5c03-4e0a-bec7-a4d500d6459c>
- Press release on the committee vote on the emergency relocation mechanism (16 July 2015): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/content/20150714IPR81615/html/MEPs-want-a-binding-and-permanent-scheme-to-distribute-asylum-seekers-in-the-EU>