

Immigration : five GUE/NGL MEPs question the European Commission on detention centres in Lampedusa

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IMMIGRATION: FIVE GUE/NGL MEPs PUT QUESTION THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON DETENTION CENTRES IN LAMPEDUSA

Brussels 04/03/2009

Five GUE/NGL MEPs - **Giusto Catania** (Italy), **Willy Meyer Pleite** (Spain), **Vittorio Agnoletto** (Italy), **Gabi Zimmer** (Germany) and **Roberto Musacchio** (Italy) - presented a question to the European Commission yesterday on the subject of migrant detention centres on the island of Lampedusa, Italy. A delegation of GUE/NGL MEPs visited the Contrada Imbriacola detention centre and the former Loran military base on the island on 13 and 14 February last.

In their question, the MEPs said they wanted the Commission "to check, on the basis of documentary evidence including press articles, films and photographs, that the conditions in the two centres for migrants on Lampedusa respect European directives on reception, and whether the situation we discovered during our independent inspection does not point to serious violations of fundamental rights of individuals, including the status of irregular migrants, asylum seekers, regular residents or ordinary citizens". The MEPs asked the Commission to ensure that "in terms of the construction of the new Loran centre and the partial reconstruction of the Contrada Imbriacola centre, European standards in the environmental field as well as rules on contract tendering have been respected". The question also seeks to assess if the Italian government had introduced "demand for Community funding for the construction of new centres in Italy, in particular in Lampedusa, or funding for the reception of asylum seekers in centres on Italian soil". Last, but not least, Euro-Parliamentarians, requested the involvement of Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights at the Council of Europe, as well as the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture. They have also written to Gérard Deprez, President of the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, to ensure that a demand to send a delegation to Lampedusa is added to the agenda of the meeting of group coordinators.

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