

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2875/03
by H el ene Flautre (Verts/ALE)
to the Council

Subject: Situation of migrants and asylum-seekers in Malta

A number of reports from reliable sources, such as the Maltese Jesuit Refugee Service, suggest that asylum-seekers in Malta are being detained in deplorable, if not wretched, conditions for periods of up to 18 months.

According to official Maltese sources, about 400 people, most of them asylum-seekers, are incarcerated solely because they entered Maltese territory illegally. They are also being held without being given any information on the likely outcome of their cases.

Is the Council aware of the very worrying situation of migrants and asylum-seekers in Malta?

Does the Council recognise that such a situation is in breach of international law, and in particular the European Human Rights Convention and the 1951 Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees?

Now that there are only a few months to go before Malta joins the European Union, what does the Council intend to do to ensure that Malta complies with its international obligations and the existing body of Union legislation in this sphere?