

**Question for written answer P-003645/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Migration flows to Sicily

Immigrants have once again started to arrive in Lampedusa and in many other ports and coastal areas in Sicily in recent days, but in far greater numbers: 8 500 have landed in Italy since the start of 2014. This is ten times the number recorded in the same period in 2013.

What is more, the highly unstable political situation in Libya makes it likely that as weather conditions improve, the numbers of migrants arriving will rise still further and, at the current rate, will far exceed the 43 000 who landed last year.

Approximately 100 migrants died off the coast of Lampedusa on 3 October 2013 when the boat in which they were trying to reach Italy sank. However the impact of the streams of migrants crossing the Mediterranean is also felt in many other coastal and inland areas of Sicily.

A few days after this incident, on 10 October 2013, Parliament gave its final approval to the new EU border surveillance system Eurosur.

The Commission allocated EUR 50 million at the beginning of December 2013 to initiatives that would strengthen mutual help and solidarity between Member States in order to save the lives of migrants in peril in the Mediterranean. Italy was allocated EUR 30 million of this.

A few weeks later, images of the treatment immigrants receive at the initial reception centre in Lampedusa sparked a major international controversy and Commissioner Malmström said publically that an investigation was underway to check that EU standards for the reception of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees were being observed by the Italian authorities.

In view of the above, can the Commission state how the Mediterranean air and sea surveillance operations coordinated by Frontex are progressing?

How is the new EU border surveillance system Eurosur being implemented?

What have been the findings of the investigation into reception conditions for migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, as provided by the Italian authorities?

How is the work of the task force approved by the October European Council progressing?