



Fraktion der Europäischen Volkspartei (Christdemokraten) und europäischer Demokraten im Europäischen Parlament
Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats in the European Parliament
Groupe du Parti Populaire Européen (Démocrates-Chrétiens) et Démocrates Européens au Parlement européen

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MEP pushes through changes in report on illegal immigration

A report on illegal immigration adopted today by the European Parliament was successfully changed following amendments tabled by MEP Simon Busuttil.

The report was tabled by MEP Moreno Sanchez but substantially changed following a number of amendments, including nine from Dr Busuttil.

Dr Busuttil's amendments sought to sharpen the report with a better reflection of the situation prevailing in Southern EU Member States, such as Malta.

The changes introduced by Dr Busuttil include the following key points:

- Member States should be jointly responsible for saving lives at sea and non-EU countries too are called upon to respect international obligations on search and rescue.
- EU external borders should be jointly managed since smaller Member States, such as Malta, are shouldering a disproportionate burden.
- Member States should honour their undertakings to provide assets and equipment for FRONTEX operations. The Commission should propose a new law to bind Member States on their pledges as has recently been done with the setting up of Rapid Border Intervention Teams (RABITs) which is based on compulsory, rather than optional, solidarity.
- A thorough review of the Dublin II regulation given that it places a disproportionate and unsustainable burden on Member States such as Malta.
- The Commission and Council should redouble their efforts to fight criminal networks aiding and abetting illegal immigration and organizing human trafficking.

On Dr Busuttil's initiative the report also took note of the burden-sharing proposal made by the Maltese Government in the Justice and Home Affairs Council earlier this year. This is the first time that this proposal was put on the European Parliament's agenda.

Welcoming the adoption of the report, Dr Busuttil said: *"This report keeps illegal immigration firmly at the top of our agenda and sets the European Parliament's priorities on illegal immigration. I am glad that my amendments were successfully included since they give an added dimension of the reality that is faced by Southern Member States such as Malta."*

He continued: *"The European Parliament is constantly putting pressure on EU countries to get their act together on immigration. This is why we are finally seeing some results. But much more needs to be done."*

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