

# Press release – Migrants and asylum seekers on the Greek islands: committee debate



In a debate with representatives of the European Commission and the NGO [Greek Council for Refugees](#), the Civil Liberties Committee will look into the latest figures on the number of people [arriving and staying in reception and emergency shelters](#), and assess the humanitarian situation on the ground. According to UNHCR, there are currently around 18,500 migrants and asylum-seekers stranded on the Aegean islands.

MEPs will also learn from the European Commission about the project involving EU bodies and the Greek authorities [to set up a new reception centre on the island of Lesbos](#) by early September 2021. The plan was agreed in the aftermath of the [fire that destroyed the Moria camp](#) in September last year. It should contribute to offering adequate reception conditions for asylum-seekers whilst ensuring the necessary screening and identification take place, and that asylum and return procedures are managed more quickly.

**When:** Wednesday, 27 January, from 14.35 to 16.15

**Where:** European Parliament in Brussels, József Antall building, room 202 & via remote participation.

You can [follow the meeting live](#).

## **Background**

The EU response to the humanitarian crisis following the destruction of the

Moria camp was the focus of a [plenary debate with Commissioner Ylva Johansson](#) just after the fire, on 17 September 2020. Last week, MEPs assessed again in plenary the [situation of refugees and migrants at the EU's external borders](#).

The Civil Liberties Committee has repeatedly [called on the EU and the Greek Government to adopt measures](#) to improve the living conditions of refugees on the Aegean islands and ensure their asylum-claims are processed smoothly.

The current turmoil surrounding the EU border agency Frontex, whose alleged involvement in pushbacks of asylum-seekers in Aegean waters has prompted an [internal investigation](#), as well as [calls from the European Parliament for more transparency](#) to ensure respect of human rights, is likely to be raised during the debate too.