Press release | 29.04.2015

Mediterranean migration crisis

MEPs call for European governments to do more sea rescue

The European Parliament today debated the ongoing crisis involving refugees in the Mediterranean and adopted a resolution on the EU's response. After the vote, Green migration spokesperson **Judith Sargentini** said:

"The European Parliament has today sent a clear and strong signal that EU governments need to do much more to ensure refugees crossing the Mediterranean are rescued and not left to die. Simply giving more money, boats and resources to the Triton mission of the EU's FRONTEX border control agency is clearly not sufficient. FRONTEX only has a mandate to patrol coastal waters but this is not where the catastrophes are occurring. We need to focus resources on sea rescue in the areas where boats of refugees are in difficulty. This means creating a designated EU-funded search and rescue programme.

"EU leaders last week totally failed to acknowledge that the lack of clear, legal pathways for migration is playing a direct role in these catastrophes. Without this, those fleeing desperate situations have no recourse but to turn to smugglers. The European Parliament has today sent a message on the need to redress this through creating more humanitarian visas and accommodating some of the huge number of refugees created by the Syrian crisis under the UN's resettlement programme. Despite the appeal by the UNHCR, most EU member states have done little to accommodate Syrian refugees, with 13 EU member states having accepted none at all. The voluntary approach has failed and this is a shame for Europe. We need binding commitments for mandatory resettlement.

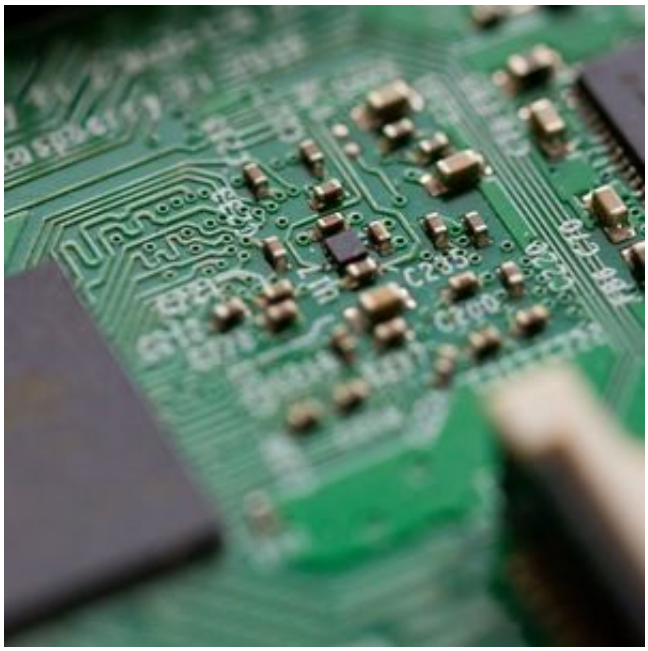
"Parliament also criticised the irresponsible approach of EU member states towards asylum seekers. Under the Dublin regulation, the entire responsibility is left to southern EU member states. This system has to change. We need binding commitments for a fair reallocation of asylum seekers across EU member states and not just where they cross the border. This distribution must also take account of factors like language knowledge and if asylum seekers have family. This will strengthen integration and reduce secondary migration."

- A Greens/EFA paper outlining how the EU's asylum system should be reformed can be found at: http://www.greens-efa.eu/green-proposals-for-a-european-migration-and-asylum-strategy-13919.html

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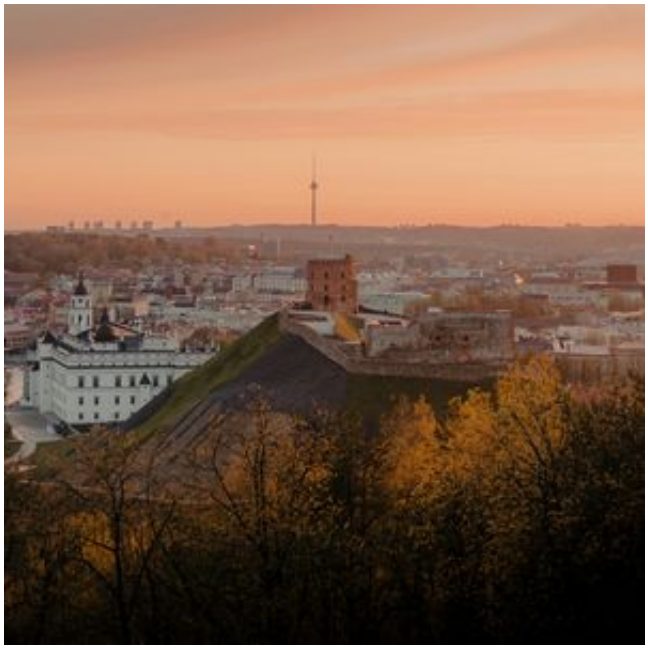
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Judith Sargentini

Member

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