

*May 4th 2011*

The Commission's refusal to endorse Italy's claim that its temporary immigration permits are valid throughout Union territory is a reflection of the disastrous immigration policy pursued by the Italian Government over the last three months. The justification for the refusal was that, because of the restrictive reception policies pursued by its government in recent years, Italy had taken in up to three times fewer the number of immigrants and refugees than other European countries.

The European debate on immigration would certainly be more rational, however, if it started from the premise that Europe is perfectly capable of dealing with an increase — even a large one — in current migratory flows and that, if we wish to maintain current levels of welfare and social security (above all, pensions), we need to accommodate a substantial number of immigrants within European territory. Despite these incontrovertible facts, the Italian Government has long favoured a campaign of fear and xenophobic hatred, brandishing the threat of an unsustainable biblical exodus from North Africa as a result of the democratic revolutions taking place there.

1. In the Commission's judgment, how plausible is it to speak of the possibility of an imminent mass exodus from the countries of North Africa?

2. Bearing in mind current birth rates and the existence of an ageing population, can the Commission provide a rough estimate of the number of immigrants the European Union as a whole, and its individual Member States, need to take in each year in order to maintain their current economic and social standards?

*Question for written answer  
to the Commission  
Rule 117  
Pino Arlacchi (S&D)*

[Answer given by Ms Malmström](#)

[on behalf of the Commission, 5.7.2011](#)

*Letter by Pino Arlacchi to the Commissioner Cecilia Malmström*

Dear Commissioner Malstrom,

This is to thank you for the detailed, interesting and full of substance answer you gave to my interrogation on migration flows to EU from North Africa and the rest o the world.

Since it is quite uncommon to receive so valid feedbacks from the Commission, I hope your style of managing these subjects will continue and be an example for the other Commissioners.

Whit my best regards  
Pino Arlacchi

[source: [www.europarl.europa.eu](http://www.europarl.europa.eu) ]