

# *European Illegal Immigrant Influx Up 140% in 2014*

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Brussels, January 14 (RHC)-- The European Parliament has confirmed that the entry of illegal immigrants to the 28-nation bloc spiked in 2014. Dimitris Avramopoulos, the EU's Commissioner for Migration and Home Affairs, told the European Parliament: "In 2014, more than 276,000 migrants arrived in the EU, representing an increase of 138 percent compared to the previous year."

The commissioner went on to say that 207,000 of the migrants entered Europe through the Mediterranean Sea, where smugglers have started to pack ships with hundreds of migrants then abandoning them at sea. In some cases, smugglers pack a ship full of immigrants, give it a collision course, and leave the ship before it slams into the coast.

"Smugglers are finding new routes to Europe and are employing new methods in order to exploit desperate people who are trying to escape conflict and war," Avramopoulos said during a speech.

Since September, over 12 cargo ships carrying illegal immigrants have arrived in Europe, mainly in Italy. "Better coordination and a more comprehensive approach will help to address the roots of the current flows of irregular migrants and of smuggling," he added.

The European Union official said: "In order to respond to the constantly evolving strategies of smugglers, the European Union, its agencies and the member states have to step up their cooperation and common action in the spirit of solidarity and responsibility."



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