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[Opinion](#) | 23.03.2020

## Evacuate vulnerable asylum seekers from Greek islands

### Corona virus

Members of the European Parliament are calling on the crisis team of the European Commission to make an emergency plan to protect vulnerable asylum seekers against Covid-19. Greens/EFA MEP Tineke Strik started the initiative.

On the Greek islands there are now more than 42.000 asylum seekers, while camps were supposed to house 6.000 people. The overpopulation in the camps and insufficient sanitary facilities make it impossible to take adequate preventive measures like social distancing or self-isolation.

The letter, sent on behalf of the members of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE), is supported by a majority in the European Parliament. Last week Doctors without Borders called for attention for the distressing situation in Moria, the refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos.

The Members of the European Parliament call for

- A preventive evacuation of people with a high risk: people above sixty years old, with respiratory diseases, diabetes or other diseases increasing the risk of serious symptoms
- An increase in capacity for hospitalisation and intensive care units.
- A guarantee for quick relocation, in particular for children. This is possible with additional measures for quarantine.

Greens/EFA Coordinator of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee, Tineke Strik MEP, said:

*“On the Greek islands there is barely enough medical support for asylum seekers. There are no means of isolation to quickly stop a possible outbreak of the corona virus. On top of this, refugees are extra vulnerable because of the bad conditions in the camps. If the European Commission doesn't start with a swift preventive evacuation, this will have disastrous consequences. In these hard times for us all, we cannot turn a blind eye*

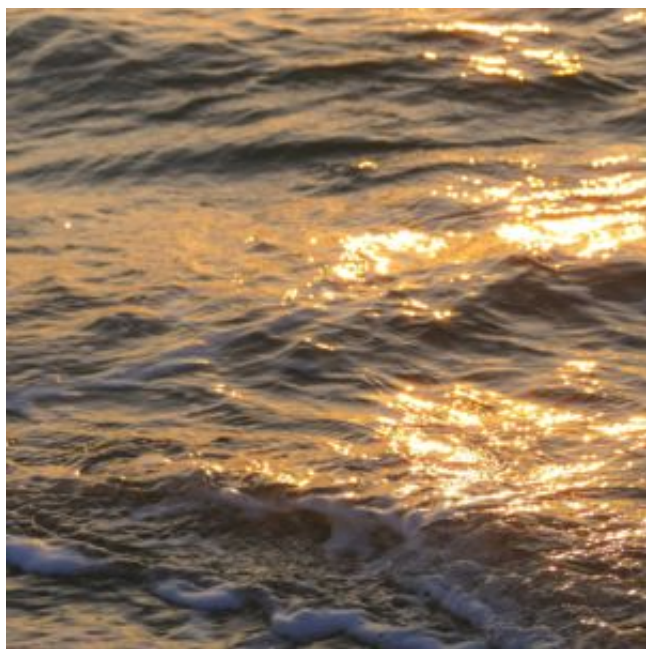
*to other people in need.”*

- [Read full letter as sent by the president of the LIBE committee](#)

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Tineke Strik

Member

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