

Chrysochoidis: Migrant arrivals on Greek islands are ‘unmanageable’



The problem created on the Greek islands of the eastern Aegean with the rising number of migrant and refugee arrivals in the past few months is “unmanageable” and “explosive,” Citizens’ Protection Minister Michalis Chrysochoidis said on Wednesday, speaking at a committee of the European Parliament.

Quizzed by members of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee on Greece’s handling of migration, the minister said that even if the EU’s entire mechanism has been mobilized “it wouldn’t be able to manage this human tsunami.”

Chrysochoidis defended the government’s new law to tackle migration and speed up the asylum procedure, noting that doctors in camps and employees in the asylum service are faced with hundreds of daily arrivals and can no longer cope.

“It is impossible to offer hospitality at a human level at these [arrival] rate. It is a humanitarian catastrophe and a social disaster,” he said.

Asked about the government's decision to abolish the Migration Policy Ministry, which was created by the previous leftist administration, Chrysochoidis said that, in other countries, migration is the purview of interior ministries.

Responding to criticism by some MEPs that the government did not allow time for proper public consultation over the new asylum law, the minister noted that the government adopted most of the proposals from international organizations which were among the 332 comments submitted within six days.

Concerning the access to healthcare for refugees and migrants, he said all children are inoculated on the islands and that all asylum seekers have access to health services.

He also noted that the new law makes education compulsory for all children refugees.

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