EC/Serbia agreement: readmission agreement

2007/0153(CNS) - 08/11/2007 - Final act

PURPOSE: to sign and conclude a Readmission Agreement between **Serbia** and the Community.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision 2007/819/EC on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Community and the Republic of Serbia on the readmission of persons residing without authorisation.

CONTENT: the purpose of this Decision is the conclusion of an Agreement between the Community and Serbia on Readmission. The Agreement with Serbia has been, as far as possible, harmonised with the draft Readmission Agreements of the other Western Balkans countries.

The main elements of the Agreement can be summarised as follows:

- the Agreement has been divided into eight sections with 23 Articles. It contains seven Annexes and six joint Declarations, all of which form an integral part of the overall Agreement;
- the readmission obligations are fully reciprocal and comprise of own nationals, third country nationals and stateless persons – including those of Serbia and the former nationals of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who have acquired no other nationality;
- this obligation to readmit own nationals extends to former own national who have renounced, or who have been deprived of, their nationality without acquiring the nationality of another State;
- the obligation to readmit own nationals covers family members (i.e. spouses and minor unmarried children) who hold a nationality other than the person to be readmitted and who do not have an independent right of residence in the Requesting State;
- the obligation to readmit third country nationals and stateless persons is linked to a number of prerequisites, such as: the person concerned holds, or at the time of entry held, a valid visa or resident permit issued by the Requested State; or the person concerned illegally and directly entered the territory of the Requesting State after having stayed on or transited through he territory of the Requested State. Those in airside transit and all persons to whom the Requesting State has issued a visa or residence authorisation before or after entry to its territory are exempted from these obligations;
- former nationals of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia who have acquired no other nationality will be treated as a separate category. It is proposed that their readmission will be accepted by Serbia on condition that firstly, their place of birth was on Serbia's territory and secondly their place of permanent residence on the date of independence (27 April 1992) was on the territory of that State. It is worth noting that the specific conditions for the readmission of this category of person was applied horizontally in all of the Readmission Agreement with the other Western Balkan countries;
- Serbia agrees to accept the use of the EU's standard travel documents for expulsion purposes – both for own nationals as well as for third country nationals or stateless persons;
- Section III sets out the necessary technical provisions regarding the readmission procedure. One important procedural element regarding this proposal is the so-called "accelerated" procedure, which has been agreed upon for persons apprehended in the border region. Under the accelerated procedure, readmission applications have to be submitted, and replies have to given, within 2 working days, whereas under the normal procedure the time limit for replies is 10 calendar days with the right to an extension with up to six calendar days upon request;
- a section on transit operations is foreseen as are sections on costs, data protection and relationship to other international obligations;

- Serbia as well as individual Member States will be allowed to conclude bilateral implementing Protocols.

The United Kingdom and Ireland have notified their wish to take part in the adoption and application of this Agreement. Denmark, however, will not.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: the agreement will enter into force when the necessary formalities have been concluded and on the same date as the parallel agreement on the issuance of short-stay visas (see CNS /2007/0144).