

Immigration: creation of a liaison officers network. Initiative Greece

2003/0817(CNS) - 19/02/2004 - Final act

PURPOSE : to establish an immigration liaison officers network. **LEGISLATIVE ACT** : Council Regulation 377/2004/EC on the creation of an immigration liaison officers network. **CONTENT** : This Regulation establishes that immigration liaison officers must maintain direct contacts with the competent authorities in the host country with a view to facilitating and expediting the collection and exchange of information. The information shall in particular concern issues such as: - flows of illegal immigrants originating from or transiting through the host country; - routes followed by those flows of illegal immigrants in order to reach the territories of the Member States; - their modus operandi, including the means of transport used, the involvement of intermediaries, etc.; - the existence and activities of criminal organisations involved in the smuggling of immigrants; - incidents and events that may be or become the cause for new developments with respect to flows of illegal immigrants, - methods used for counterfeiting or falsifying identity documents and travel documents; - ways and means to assist the authorities in host countries in preventing illegal immigration flows originating from or transiting through their territories; - ways and means to facilitate the return and repatriation of illegal immigrants to their countries of origin; - legislation and legal practices relevant to the issues referred to above; - information transmitted via the early warning system. Immigration liaison officers shall also be entitled to render assistance in establishing the identity of third country nationals and in facilitating their return to their country of origin. The main points of the Regulation are as follows: - There are some provisions on data protection; - Member States must inform one another, the Council and the Commission of their secondments of immigration liaison officers, including a description of their duties. The Commission will provide a collection of this information to the Council and Member States; - Member States shall ensure that their immigration liaison officers posted to the same third countries or regions constitute local or regional cooperation networks among each other. The Regulation sets out a list of prescribed activities for the network; - Member States agree that immigration liaison officers who are posted to a third country shall also look after the interests of one or more other Member States and share certain tasks among each other; - The immigration liaison officers could be posted to the national consular authorities of Member States in third countries or to the relevant authorities of other Member States, but also to the competent authorities of the third countries, as well as to international organisations for a reasonable time period to be determined by the posting Member State. **ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 5 January 2004.