Simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the EU

2013/0119(COD) - 27/04/2016 - Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, 2nd reading

The Committee on Legal Affairs adopted the recommendation for second reading contained in the report by Mady DELVAUX (S&D, LU) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on promoting the free movement of citizens by simplifying the requirements for presenting certain public documents in the European Union and amending Regulation (EU) No 1024/2012.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament **approve, unamended, the Council position at first reading**.

To recall, the aim of this legislation is to promote the free movement of citizens and businesses by simplifying the acceptance of certain public documents in the European Union. It does not affect recognition of the content of public documents, particularly out of a concern to preserve the sovereignty of the Member States with regard to family law.

After interinstitutional negotiations, the co-legislators and the Commission have agreed a compromise text.

The regulation covers all civil status documents and certain other documents that are often required by members of the public, concerning for example residence, nationality and absence of a criminal record.

For these public documents, the regulation exempts members of the public from legalisation and apostille, which are two administrative formalities traditionally required for public documents issued by another country. Simplified acceptance measures are also laid down with regard to certified copies and certified translations. Lastly, the regulation also provides for the creation of multilingual standard forms for most of the public documents concerned.

In the explanatory statement accompanying the draft resolution, Members recalled that the Parliament would have liked to include within the scope of the regulation diplomas and education certificates, certificates of disability and certain documents relevant to businesses. Furthermore, multilingual standard forms cannot circulate autonomously but must be annexed to the appropriate national documents, which constitutes an avoidable complication.

However, this does not alter the fact that **substantial progress has been made**. In addition, the regulation contains revision clauses with a view to extending the scope of the administrative simplifications in future.