Third-country nationals in the Member states : Convention on rules for the admission

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Following the request made by Mr Martin SCHULZ (PSE , DE), supported by the rapporteur, Mr Klaus-Heiner LEHNE (EPP , DE), the European Parliament referred back to committee the latter's report on the rules for the admission of third country nationals into the Member States. This request was intended to allow a broader consensus to be achieved before the vote in plenary. The rapporteur, Mr LEHNE, particularly considered that the amendment adopted in committee regarding the authorisation of admission, for the purposes of family reunification, of partners of the same sex would result in extensive migratory movements. Likewise, he considered that giving third country nationals the right to vote in local elections was not acceptable as not all European Union nationals had this right. He believed that it was also not acceptable for third country nationals to have more rights than EU nationals. He also regretted that the committee had rejected his proposal to allow the expulsion of third country nationals who had received sentences of three years or more. In conclusion, having stressed that not all the amendments adopted in the Committee on Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs reflected his personal position, he called for and obtained the referral of this issue back to committee. He asked Parliament to show that it was serious on this issue, particularly given the codecision in this case following the Treaty of Amsterdam. He also asked the PSE Group to review its amendments. The Commission pointed out that family reunification was a fundamental right and that, if the EU wanted to meet its international obligations in this respect, it would have to find a solution. The Commission would therefore have to find some common ground on the definition of 'family reunification'. In this respect, the Commission's proposal allowed a significant step forward to be made.