

Illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings: residence permit issued to victims

2002/0043(CNS) - 11/11/2003 - Amended legislative proposal for reconsultation

The Council, at its meeting held on 6 November 2003, reached political agreement amending the text of the Commission's initial proposal on certain important points. Because of these substantial amendments, the Council decided to consult the Parliament again, in accordance with Article 67 of the EC Treaty.

The terms of the new text by Council strengthen the European Union's legislative framework for combating illegal immigration by granting a residence permit of limited duration to the victims of action to facilitate illegal immigration and of trafficking in human beings. The granting of the residence permit, to which a certain number of benefits is attached, is subject to conditions designed to encourage such people to cooperate with the competent authorities against those suspected of committing the crimes in question.

This is a very important legal instrument in the fight against trafficking in human beings and illegal immigration, which will be beneficial both to the victims and to the Member States' competent authorities. Victims, should they decide to cooperate with the competent authorities, will receive an appropriate assistance and be issued a residence permit allowing them to stay legally on the territory of the Member State concerned during the relevant proceedings.

The formal adoption of this Directive will take place after the two outstanding Parliamentary reservations have been withdrawn.