

Asylum and migration: programme for financial and technical assistance to third countries, 2004-2008

2003/0124(COD) - 11/06/2003 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish a programme for financial and technical help to third countries to better manage migratory flows. **CONTENT** : the continuation, or even acceleration, of international migratory flows will have major consequences for both the EU and third countries. The Tampere and Seville European Councils spoke of the need to strengthen policies that focus on the root causes of international migration while at the same time working to strengthen the migration management capacity of third countries through reinforced specific measures. This proposal aims to provide a legal framework for a multiannual programme of co-operation with third countries in the area of migration and asylum. The general objective of this co-operation programme is to give specific and complementary financial and technical aid to third countries in order to support their efforts in better managing migratory flows in all their dimensions. It is, in particular, intended for the third countries actively engaged in the preparation or in the implementation of a readmission agreement with the EC. The programme will contribute in the third countries concerned to the following objectives: - the development of their legislation in the field of legal immigration, in particular on admission rules, on the rights and status of persons admitted, on equal treatment of legal residents, on integration and non-discrimination as well as on measures to combat racism and xenophobia; - the development of regular migration taking account of the demographic, economic and social situation in the countries of origin and in the host countries; - the development of their legislation and national practices as regards international protection, with a view to satisfying the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 1951 on the status of refugees and of the Protocol of 1967 and other relevant international instruments, to ensuring the respect of the principle of " non refoulement " and to improving the capacity of the third countries receiving asylum seekers and refugees; - the establishment in the third countries concerned of an effective and preventive policy in the fight against illegal migration, including in particular the fight against trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, - the orderly readmission and durable re-integration of persons who have illegally entered or remained on the territory of the EU into the third country. The proposal lists the kind of actions, which will be financed. These include: - setting up information campaigns on the consequences of illegal immigration and of clandestine employment in the EU; - dissemination of information on the possibilities of working legally in the EU and on the procedures to be followed to this end; - development of actions aimed at maintaining links between the local communities in the country of origin and their emigrants. The target population is chiefly: - people in third countries wishing to emigrate; - staff of third countries working in the field of asylum and migration; - the authorities in third countries responsible for asylum and migration and the management of borders; - third-country nationals being readmitted or having opted for voluntary return; - refugees and persons seeking international protection. Organisations eligible for financial support include NGOs and UN agencies. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the Regulation is EUR 250 million. The programme will run from 2004 to 2008.