Free movement of persons: right of residence (direct. 90/364/EEC, 90/365/EEC, 93/96/EC, 64 /221/EEC)

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The committee adopted the report by Alima BOUMEDIENE-THIERY (Greens/EFA, F) on the Commission report on right of residence and on special measures concerning the movement and residence of citizens of the Union. The committee stressed the need, on the basis of an overhaul of the existing rules, to adopt a framework directive to organise and guarantee the unimpeded exercise of freedom of movement and residence. Such a directive should make the exercise of European citizenship far more effective, by putting an end to existing inequalities of treatment. As a first step, the report called for the introduction for all applicants of a resident permit of one year. The committee deplored the abusive use by Member States of public policy as grounds for expulsions and said that automatic deportation as a result of a criminal conviction was a breach of Community law. Deportations must all be accounted for in terms of a present danger to public order and safety and must be carefully assessed in the light of the personal circumstances of the persons concerned and the need to protect family life. Third-country nationals who were born in the country of residence or who had lived there since childhood should not be deported under any circumstances. The committee also called for family reunion to be simplified and facilitated, including for unmarried partners, non-dependent relatives in the descending or ascending line and third-country family members of an EU national.