

Immigration: creation of a liaison officers network. Initiative Greece

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The committee adopted the report by Martine ROURE (PES, F) broadly approving the proposal under the consultation procedure, subject to a few amendments. It said that the annual summary which the Commission was required to draw up on postings of immigration liaison officers (ILOs) should be presented not just to the Council but also to the Member States so that they had all necessary information at their disposal. It was also concerned to ensure that the various reports drawn up by the EU Presidency and the Commission on the activities of ILO networks and the situation in the host third countries in which ILOs are posted should be sent to Parliament as well. On the important issue of information exchange, the committee felt that the proposal's provisions were too vague and suggested that the common manual for use by liaison officers proposed by the Italian Presidency could be used to clarify the way information is passed on and the type of information to be exchanged. Another aspect left extremely vague was the way in which ILOs should contribute to the management of legal immigration, this being one of the tasks for which they are also responsible under the proposed regulation. MEPs therefore wanted to see a common information policy aimed at making the local population aware of the existence of legal ways of immigrating and warning them of the dangers of illegal immigration and of slave trafficking networks. Lastly, the committee wanted it to be specified in the legislation that, in its activities, the ILO network must respect "democratic principles, human rights, the principle of transparency, the national sovereignty of the countries and their laws".