Refugees: 1999-2000 action programme to promote their integration in the Union

1998/0356(COD) - 13/04/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

Under consultation procedure, the European Parliament adopted the legislative resolution by Wilmya Zimmermann (PSE,DE), which approves the Commission proposal for a Council decision on establishing a Community action programme to promote the integration of refugees, subject to amendments, notably in the following areas: - recalling Article K.1 of the EU Treaty as evidence of the Member States' commitment to asylum policy as an area of common interest; - recalling the role played by the European Parliament, as one arm of the budgetary authority, in implementing the successful pilot actions for the integration of refugees in 1997 and 1998; - removing reference to the EU's commitment to economic and social cohesion in the context of integration of refugees and instead stating more simply that specific measures are required in this area; - introducing a reference to the contents of Article 73k(2)(b) of the Amsterdam Treaty in relation to burden-sharing in receiving refugees; - proposing that, as a result of the commitments contained in this Article, there is good reason to cofinance all aspects of refugee policy out of the European Refugee Fund as of the year 2000, and to adopt an appropriate legal basis as of 2001; - removing the proposal that the proposed action programme should be established within the framework of action in the field of social integration; - modifying the wording and providing clarifyication with regard to the definition of the target group for the purpose of the programme; - with regard to the aims of the programme, proposing that a specifically comparative analysis of the situation of refugees in the Member States should be promoted, with a view to assessing how the burden should be shared among Member States; - in terms of the Community actions to be pursued with a view to attaining the programme's aims, proposing that innovative projects promoted under the programme should be those whose results can be used by other Member States and which introduce integration measures for the first time into a region of the EU; also in this regard, specifying that transnational networks to be created under the programme should involve players and/or projects and/or academics concerned with integration in the European Union and should include the transfer of knowledge (as well as good practice and experience); finally, introducing a simplified wording proposing studies and research projects on the situation and integration of refugees in the European Union, and the general promotion of public awareness measures; - with regard to comitology, specifying that the advisory committee will be composed of one representative only per Member State and that its full title will be "the Committee on refugee asylum, reception and repatriation policy"; - also, requiring that the European Parliament be kept adequately informed of the deliberations of the Committee, in keeping with its budgetary powers and the new powers accorded to it in this field by the Treaty of Amsterdam; - requiring that the criteria determining financial assistance under the programme be identical to those laid down for the Council joint action (adopted on the basis of Article K.3 of theEU Treaty) establishing measures to provide practical support in relation to the reception and the voluntary repatriation of refugees, displaced persons and asylum applicants (CNS98357); - reducing the maximum Community financial contribution for the creation of transnational networks from 90 to 80% and fixing the maximum contribution at that same level for the carrying out of studies and research projects on the situation and integration of refugees in the European Union and the promotion of public awareness measures; - proposing that a single monitoring operation and a single evaluation operation for actions in relation to policy on refugee asylum, reception and repatriation be financed from appropriations authorised to that end by the budgetary authority under the annual budgetary procedure (rather than from the general appropriations available for the measures supported under the programme); - with regard to the evaluative report to be presented by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, bringing forward the deadline for its presentation by a year to 01/06/2001, requiring that it should incorporate the report specified in the Council joint action (adopted on the basis of Article K.3 of the EU Treaty) establishing measures to provide practical support in relation to the reception and the voluntary

repatriation of refugees, displaced persons and asylum applicants (CNS98357), and that it should also contain information on cooperation with the programme's advisory committee and on the type and extent of the technical assistance used.