Refugees, displaced persons, asylum seekers: voluntary repatriation and reception, Kosovo emergency assistance

1998/0357(CNS) - 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 the joint action adopted by the Council on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union establishing measures to provide practical support in relation to the reception and the voluntary repatriation of refugees, displaced persons and asylum applicants, subject to amendments, notably in the following areas: - re-titling the proposal to read: "Proposal for a Council Decision on a Joint Action adopted by the Council on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union establishing a European Refugee Fund"; - extending the provision of practical support to help those refugees who wish to do so to return from EU territory to their countries of origin to cover reception centres in the Member States; - underlining that a legal basis should be adopted for the Community financing provided under this proposal; - noting that the Amsterdam Treaty will transfer matters of "Immigration and Asylum" to the Community's sphere of competence, and proposing that, given the commitment made in Article 73k(2)(b) of the Treaty to take measures in the field of burden-sharing among Member States for receiving refugees, there is good reason to cofinance all aspects of refugee policy as of the year 2000 and to adopt a common legal basis as of 2001; - widening the definition of "displaced persons" to include persons who have sought permission to stay in a Member State under temporary protection and have been refused; - with regard to measures to be covered by the proposal in terms of improvement of the conditions in which refugees are received, changing the wording to more generally cover measures to raise public awareness in this area; - proposing that the criteria determining financial assistance under this proposal be identical to those established for the Community action programme to promote the integration of refugees (CNS98356); - requiring that technical assistance under the proposed joint action must be financed from appropriations authorised to that end by the budgetary authority under the annual budgetary procedure; - raising from EURO 200,000 to EURO 500,000 the threshold, below which the Commission shall keep the Council informed of the number of requests received for the financing of specific projects, principles applied in granting support thereto and the results of such projects, and above which the Commission will be assisted by a committee; - requiring the Commission to keep the European Parliament adequately informed of the deliberations of the committees, in keeping with its budgetary powers and the new powers accorded to it in this area by the Amsterdam Treaty; - setting a deadline of 01/06/2001 for the Commission to submit an evaluative summary report and requiring that the report should incorporate the report specified in the Council decision establishing a Community action programme to promote the integration of refugees (CNS98356) as well as information on cooperation with the advisory committee and on the type andextent of the technical assistance used.