Immigration and asylum policies

1994/2027(COS) - 21/09/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr WIEBENGA (ELDR, NL), Parliament approved the communication from the Commission on immigration and asylum. In its resolution, Parliament called on the Commission to present, before 1 January 1996, a working programme based on this resolution and containing a schedule for the measures to be introduced and their financing. The Commission was also called on to play a greater role in this particular area, with the target being the rapid harmonization of asylum and immigration policies and the possibility of bringing within the Community system a set of criteria for granting residence permits to refugees. . According to Parliament, the concept of providing a temporary reception for refugees should be the object of a Commission proposal containing at least the following: . the conditions of temporary reception, . the duration of the period of reception . the type of reception offered. Parliament also took the view that asylum and immigration policies should progressively become Community-based and that in this capacity any "resolution" or "recommendation" from the Council should be presented to Parliament under the provision of Article K6 of the Treaty on European Union. Parliament also put forward a series of proposals relating to each of the areas covered by the Commission in its communication: - Migration: . presentation of a proposal which aims to coordinate more effectively the study and the processing of information relating to migration (in the form of a monitoring centre); . definition of an appropriate policy for migration prevention in the European Union; . adoption of Community criteria for assessing asylum applications and common definition of the procedures applicable to the reception and protection of refugees; . drafting of a framework directive on immigration (to be followed by individual directives) which relates to access to the employment market, training, short-term working and the return of migrants, and introduction of a directive on family entry and settlement (on behalf of the current resolution); - Asylum: . adaptation of the asylum legislation applied by Member States, so that the procedures involved cannot take more than 3 years; . drafting of a common definition of the concept of "refugee" in the light of Article 1A of the Geneva Convention, while ensuring that refugee status is granted to anyone who is a real victim of persecution; . implementation of measures which take particular account of persons who are in a precarious legal position (children, women and unaccompanied minors); . introduction of minimum guarantees in respect of asylum procedures in the Member States, in order that: * all applicants might receive a full and fair hearing, * applicants are not transferred to non-member countries (or turned away) by Member States if effective refugee protection can be provided, * requests can only be rejected by responsible bodies, * applicants whose request has been rejected have the right of legal appeal (in the knowledge that any appeal will have a suspensive effect on deportation); . introduction by Member States of a framework of measures for persons who have undergone expatriation for reasons of serious distress, to comprise the provision of temporary reception, which does not call into question their right to apply for asylum at the end of this initial period; . introduction of a European system for the global reception of refugees, asylum seekers, etc., in order that the responsibility for such reception might be equally shared by the Member States; - Illegal immigration: . presentation of a proposal for the consistent repatriation of illegal immigrants; . strengthening of measures to combat illegal smuggling and black-market labour in the Member States; - Racism and xenophobia: . submission of a proposal for a directive to counteract discrimination; . measures to combat racism and xenophobia to be included in the priorities set for the European Community within the framework of the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference; . a code of good practice which prohibits racial discrimination is to be drawn up before 1997; - Integration: . introduction of measures which give priority to immigrants who are normally resident in the Community (easier access to dual nationality, granting of active and passive voting rights at local, regional and European level, etc.) . harmonization of measures relating to residence in the European Community in order to consolidate the status of immigrants who are normally resident in the EC; . setting up a Community programme which will include measures relating to professional training, the integration of respect for cultural identity, etc.; . promotion of basic standards for the treatment of immigrants, refugees and others, in respect of social security, employment, family entry and settlement, etc. Finally, Parliament called on the Commission and the Member States to organize an

exchange of experience in this field in order to determine whether an active immigration policy will be necessary in the future.