South East Europe: stabilisation and association process. 2nd annual report 2003

2003/2094(INI) - 20/11/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Jan Joost LAGENDIJK (Greens/EFA, NL) on the Stabilisation and association process. (Please see the summary dated 04/11/03.) Parliament also asked the SAP countries to address the problem of discrimination against the Roma population, including through the adoption of effective anti-discrimination laws and the systematic monitoring of the access offered to Roma people to education, housing, employment, health care and social services. Parliament went on to stress that present visa regime between the EU and SAP countries undermines the European perspective for these countries, and has become a source of humiliation for its citizens. There must be clear benchmarks on the ways in which the visa-regimes with the SAP countries can gradually be developed and eased as the countries undertake necessary reforms. This will offer a tangible sign that the EU is coming closer to the citizens of SAP countries. The SAP countries should promptly implement the free-trade agreements already Signed. The non-implementation of these agreements constitutes an obstacle to the development of the SAP and of viable regional markets, further weakening the economic situation. In the forthcoming Action Plan priority be given to structural and economic reforms leading to functioning market economies and achieving sustainable development. Finally, Parliament asked the countries in the region, in the light of the persistent trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation (in particular in Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina), to take action, in cooperation with the 'countries of destination', at both internal and regional level, giving top priority to assistance to the victims, to training programmes for the services responsible and to prevention by increasing public awareness and informing public opinion.