

General programme "Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows": European refugee Fund, 2008-2013

2005/0046(COD) - 14/12/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Barbara **Kudrycka** (EPP-ED, Poland) and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal:

- a new recital states that with respect to the treatment of persons falling within the scope of the Decision, Member States are bound by obligations under instruments of international law to which they are party and which prohibit discrimination;
- the "best interests of the child" in compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) should be a primary consideration of Member States when implementing the Decision;
- in light of the scope and the purpose of the Fund, it cannot, in any event, support actions with respect to areas and centres for holding persons in third countries;
- the subject matter and scope of the Fund has been amended so that the the Fund is established as part of a coherent framework also including the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the External Borders Fund for the period 2007-2013, the Decision of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the European Return Fund for the period 2008-2013, and the Council Decision establishing the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals for the period 2007-2013 , in order to contribute to the strengthening of the area of Freedom, Security and Justice and the application of the principle of solidarity between the Member States;
- actions which can be supported by the Fund now also include structures and training to ensure access to asylum procedures for asylum seekers; information or counselling on the possible outcome of the asylum procedure, including on aspects such as voluntary return; and training for the staff of local authorities;
- actions must take account of gender-related issues, the best interest of children, and victims of trafficking or forms of sexual abuse, individuals in need of emergency care and essential treatment of illness;
- the Fund shall only support actions with respect to accommodation of persons referred to in article 6(c) (information and assistance immediately upon arrival) which is separate from areas or centres solely destined for persons whose entry is refused and for persons who are intercepted after having crossed the border illegally or when approaching the external borders with a view to illegal entry into the territory of the Member States;
- 10% of the Fund's available resources may be used to support community actions;
- eligible actions include those which offer to networks linking non-governmental organisations which assist refugees and asylum-seekers and which are present in at least 10 Member States structural support intended to facilitate exchanges of experience and sound practice and to ensure that the development of Community asylum policy and practice takes into account the experience gained by non-governmental organisations and the interests of refugees and asylum seekers;

- the Fund shall also provide assistance to Member States for the implementation of emergency measures aimed at addressing situations of particular pressures. Such situations are characterised by sudden arrivals at particular points on the borders of large numbers of third country nationals who may be in need of international protection, which place exceptionally heavy and urgent demands on the reception facilities, the asylum system or infrastructure of the Member States concerned and may create risk to human life, well-being or access to protection provided under Community legislation;
- the financial envelope for the implementation of the Fund from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2013 shall be **EUR 628 million**;
- Member States will receive a fixed amount of EUR 4 000 for each resettled person falling under one of four categories. No later than 1 May each year, Member States shall provide the Commission with an estimate of the number of persons that they will resettle the following year, including a breakdown by the different categories;
- the proportion of total cost of certain actions that can be supported by the Fund has been amended in several cases;
- Parliament inserted a new clause regarding the mid-term review of the multiannual programme;
- the Commission shall lay down guidelines to ensure the visibility of the funding granted under the Decision.