

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2003/2157(INI)	Procedure completed
Asylum and migrations: collection and analysis of Community statistics, action plan		
Subject 7.10.06 Asylum, refugees, displaced persons; Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) 7.10.08 Migration policy 8.60 European statistical legislation		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs		Appointed 19/05/2003
			PPE-DE OOSTLANDER Arie M.
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		Appointed The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		11/09/2003 ELDR BOOGERD-QUAAK Johanna L.A.

Key events			
15/04/2003	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2003)0179	Summary
04/09/2003	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
07/10/2003	Vote in committee		Summary
07/10/2003	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0352/2003	
06/11/2003	Decision by Parliament	T5-0471/2003	Summary
06/11/2003	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2003/2157(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative

Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/5/19867

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(2003)0179	15/04/2003	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A5-0352/2003	07/10/2003	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T5-0471/2003 OJ C 083 02.04.2004, p. 0016-0094 E	06/11/2003	EP	Summary

Asylum and migrations: collection and analysis of Community statistics, action plan

PURPOSE : to present an Action Plan for the collection of Community statistics on matters relating to migration and asylum. CONTENT : the background to this Communication lies in Commission proposals on Community and asylum migration policy. The policy is based on a two-step approach: the adoption of a common legal framework as outlined in the Treaty and the development of an open co-ordination method to work in synergy with other EU policies. In the field of asylum, the aim is the establishment of a Common European Asylum System. These proposals are accompanied by additional measures to combat illegal immigration, in particular the smuggling and trafficking of human beings and to develop a readmission policy and a return policy. There is therefore a need for a comprehensive framework for future action on improving statistics. This paper presents the Action Plan and goes on to propose a discussion about the form and main principles of possible future legislation to underpin all statistical work in this field. At the heart of the Action Plan is the political objective that national asylum and migration figures should become widely available once produced as Community statistics and that there shall be a common analysis at Community level. As this objective pre-supposes the availability of reliable and comparable statistics, delivered in time and processed in accordance with a common statistical methodology, a considerable number of changes to current practice are required in the transitional period. The measures will apply to all statistical data collection, processing and dissemination in the field of asylum and migration, including those actions taking place on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis. The Action Plan envisages: - the adoption of new practices, common statistical methods and new forms of cooperation; - activities to enhance information exchange and promote decision-making. This will include annual meetings and ad hoc seminars bringing together under the aegis of the Commission the Member States and other providers (the Candidate Countries, Norway and Iceland), other relevant actors (UNHCR, UNSD, UNPD, UNECE, OECD, ILO, Council of Europe, IOM, IGC) and potential new providers; - changes in the current data collection or database. This includes the extension of the data collection to include data on legal entry and stay; second instance asylum decisions and data on the implementation of procedures, criteria and mechanisms for deciding which Member State is responsible for the examination of asylum applications; - production of user-friendly statistical outputs by the Commission. This implies the production of a variety of statistical outputs with the aim of meeting the needs of all groups of users of the statistics; - action relating to the legal and political framework, which includes the adoption of Community legislation on statistics and the evaluation of the implementation of this Action Plan. The Commission emphasised that the success of these measures is, to a large part, dependent on the active co-operation of the authorities in the Member States and other countries.?

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Arie OOSTLANDER (EPP-ED, NL) welcoming the Commission's proposed Action Plan. It agreed with the Commission's analysis that Community harmonisation in the field of statistics was needed in order to bring definitions and practices into line with each other. This would enable accurate and comparable figures to be obtained which could be used as the basis for devising a Community policy on migration. MEPs pointed out that currently not all Member States were supplying comprehensive information to Eurostat, and this was hampering progress. They believed that binding legislation was therefore needed so that EU policy as a whole was not adversely affected by the failure of one or more Member States to fulfil their obligations. They nevertheless stressed that any new legislation must be flexible enough to allow for ongoing adjustments to take account of improvements in practices. Above all, the publication of statistics should not become a tool for the manipulation of policy or public opinion. The report recommended that the proposed legislation be based on the 1998 UN recommendations on statistics in the field of international migration. The committee was particularly concerned that reliable data should be gathered on illegal immigration, especially trafficking in women and children, the full magnitude of which was as yet unknown. While understanding the Council's view that some data on illegal migration was sensitive, it said that this must not be used as a pretext for not supplying Eurostat with general statistics. It also recommended that statistics compiled by Member States and NGOs should be combined in order to avoid duplication of effort and to obtain a more complete picture of the phenomenon of illegal immigration. The Commission was urged to investigate whether Eurodac and EUROPOL might also be involved as providers of data. MEPs also insisted on the importance of gathering gender-based statistics and pointed to the gender differences in the reasons for migration, types of migration and the conditions in which women and men migrants live. Lastly, they stressed the need for adequate funding to be made available for implementing the Action Plan and called on the Commission to clarify which budget lines would be used.?

Asylum and migrations: collection and analysis of Community statistics, action plan

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report by Arie OOSTLANDER (EPP-ED, Netherlands) on Community statistics on migration. The resolution was adopted by 314 votes in favour, 15 against with 66 abstentions. (Please see the document dated 07/10/03.) Parliament felt that all statistics must be transparent, i.e. they must be accessible and intelligible to the general

public, with any exceptions being accepted only in instances where the privacy of the individual is at stake. It noted the concerns of non-governmental organisations with regard to the sharing of data on victims of smuggling and trafficking with Member States, given that it is of the utmost importance to assure confidentiality of this information. Although non-governmental organisations have information on smuggling and trafficking, this information is yet not collected in a systematic manner. Governmental and non-governmental organisations publish statistics which are difficult to read together, for example because they sometimes provide information about asylum requests but not about temporary protection. Eurostat must be given a coordinating role in the publication of clear, comprehensive, objective and comparable statistics, with no actor, as a data provider, being able to claim a pre-eminent role. In this connection, it is important to pay attention to the integrity of Eurostat as an organisation in order to guarantee confidence in the data published. Finally, Parliament asked the Commission to take the necessary initiatives based on the Brussels declaration on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, in particular, on the establishment of a European database for missing persons, in conjunction with INTERPOL and EUROPOL, which would include specially recorded details of missing persons who are believed to be victims of traffickers.?