

EU resettlement framework

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The Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs adopted a report by Malin BJÖRK (GUE/NGL, SE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Union Resettlement Framework and amending Regulation (EU) No 516/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council.

The committee recommended that the European Parliaments position in first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

A durable solution: Members stressed that resettlement is a well-established act of solidarity with refugee-hosting countries based on humanitarian needs. It is a tool for protection, and it is a responsibility-sharing mechanism.

The Union Resettlement Framework shall:

- guarantee the legal and safe transfer and arrival of third-country nationals and stateless persons who are among the most vulnerable persons in need of international protection to the territory of the Member States with a view to providing them with a durable solution;
- encourage all Member States to gradually increase their resettlement efforts and the overall number of available resettlement places, as well as support and facilitate the reception and integration of resettled persons;
- contribute to international resettlement initiatives, including through the strategic use of resettlement, particularly in protracted refugee situations.

In determining the regions or third countries from which resettlement shall occur, Members suggested taking into consideration:

- the number of vulnerable persons in need of international protection as specified in the annual UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs report ;
- third countries and regions hosting protracted refugee situations.

Eligibility: if one family member is being considered for resettlement (e.g. on protection grounds), Member States should seek to ensure, in line with the principle of family unity, that all of the persons family members, including dependent non-nuclear family members, are resettled together.

Persons who have committed a serious non-political crime and persons for whom there are serious grounds for considering that they are a danger to the public or national security or, public health, of the Member State examining the resettlement file are excluded from the eligibility criteria.

Two-yearly Union resettlement plan: every two years, the Commission should adopt delegated acts to supplement the regulation, in order to establish a resettlement plan for the Union.

The Union resettlement plan shall include a target number of persons to be resettled that should reflect at a minimum 20% of the Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs, as well as an unallocated emergency quota, of persons to be resettled, to take into account urgent and emergency cases irrespective of the geographical priorities.

Where the combined voluntary participation of all Member States does not add up to 75% of the target number of persons to be resettled at the end of the two years period of the Union resettlement plan, the targeted Union resettlement schemes shall set the precise number of persons that each Member State shall resettle with the goal of reaching at least that percentage from the target number.

Targeted Union resettlement schemes: the Commission will have delegated in respect of establishing targeted Union resettlement schemes.

When implementing a targeted Union resettlement scheme, Member States shall, for the selection, primarily rely on identification and submission of cases by the UNHCR. Other actors for identification may be Member States or relevant organisations.

Ordinary procedure: after identifying third-country nationals or stateless persons, Member States shall perform appropriate security checks against relevant Union and national databases, including the Schengen Information System.

A decision on resettlement should be made no later than eight months after the registration of the persons concerned, which may be extended by up to three months.

After taking a decision, Member States should inform the persons concerned of their rights and obligations, including the rights and obligations arising from refugee status or subsidiary protection.

In the event of a negative decision, no resettlement of the person concerned may take place in the Member State that took the decision. The reason for the rejection should be communicated in a reasoned opinion to UNHCR and other Member States.

Emergency procedure: Members proposed introducing an emergency procedure, with security checks at the same level as in the ordinary procedure.

As part of the emergency procedure, the submission of urgent UNHCR resettlement cases should lead to an expedited assessment of compliance with the requirements and selection criteria established by the Regulation.

Urgent resettlement files should not necessarily be linked to geographic priorities and emergency places should be about 10% of the target.

High-Level Resettlement Committee: Members considered that this Committee should align its work with that of international resettlement structures, particularly the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement and UNHCR's Annual Projected Global Resettlement Needs. The main task of the Committee shall be to outline the main components of the Union resettlement plan as well as the different targeted Union

resettlement schemes, in particular making recommendations on the number of persons to be resettled, the equitable distribution of those persons among the Member States, the third countries from which resettlements should be undertaken, and the opportunities for strategic use of resettlement.

Role of the European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA): the role of the EUAA would be to support Member States in their resettlement efforts as well as to build their capacity in this area. At the request of Member States, the EUAA would provide support for the implementation of the Union Resettlement Framework.