

PARLIAMENT OF ROMANIA

CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES

DECISION

approving the opinion on the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - Action Plan on the integration of third-country nationals (COM(2016) 377)

Pursuant to the provisions of Articles 67 and 148 of the Romanian Constitution, republished, of Law No 373/2013 on cooperation between Parliament and the Government in the area of European affairs, and of Rules 160 to 185 of the Rules of Procedures of the Chamber of Deputies, republished,

the Chamber of Deputies hereby adopts this Decision:

Sole Article - Having regard to Opinion No 4c-19/1098, adopted by the Committee for European Affairs at its meeting of 27 September 2016, **the Chamber of Deputies:**

1. agrees with the Commission that, when developing integration policies at EU, national or local level, special attention should be paid to gender aspects and the situation of children and persons in a potentially vulnerable situation, including victims of gender-based violence and persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities who could face discrimination or disproportionate integration hurdles;
2. draws attention to the importance of public attitudes and national financial and budgetary capacities in the development of policies on the integration of third-country nationals, and stresses that in cases where the citizens of a Member State tend to have, often justifiably, reservations about refugees, it is very difficult to implement any integration measures;
3. calls on the Commission to step up action in the countries of departure and to monitor the EU's relations with Turkey closely to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Humanitarian Admission Scheme for Turkey and the one-for-one resettlement scheme under the EU-Turkey Statement;
4. is concerned that, despite the efforts made, third-country nationals across the EU continue to fare worse than EU citizens in terms of employment, education and social inclusion outcomes;
5. believes that the Commission should do more to ensure that the integration of third-country nationals is no longer obstructed by barriers in the education system so as to prevent perpetuating or even increasing poverty and the risk of social exclusion among their children;
6. draws attention to the budgetary effort needed to organise social integration courses for refugees, including language courses, and calls on the Commission to ensure that such financial efforts do not affect the budget earmarked for cohesion and less developed Member States;
7. points out that many of the specific problems that newly arrived refugees are faced with, such as the vulnerability caused by the trauma they suffered and the lack of supporting documents, including documents relating to their qualifications, are a result of the insufficiency of the EU's external action to halt migration flows at source, and calls for a more active presence of the EU in the areas where those flows originate;
8. calls on the Commission to make a clear distinction between integration objectives relating to legal migration and those involving the more recent migration phenomenon, so as to avoid giving the appearance of socio-political acceptance of the latter;
9. points out that innovative technologies, social media and the internet, which are resources intended to be used at all stages of the integration process of third-country nationals, including pre-departure, carry the risk of being used to prepare terrorist attacks and even spur migration flows;

10. is concerned about the arrangements for allocating financial support to Member States for their integration policies for third-country nationals, given the Commission's tendency to impose refugee quotas on Member States;
11. regrets that direct support measures are envisaged for low-skilled migrants while the measures taken to combat unemployment among young nationals at EU level are rather modest;
12. notes that the level of education of asylum seekers in the EU varies according to the country of origin, which causes serious practical problems in supporting social integration, particularly as regards access to education, and could have a strong negative impact on Member States whose education systems are faced with very real funding gaps or other problems;
13. notes that measures to encourage Member States to promote private sponsorship programmes for the resettlement of refugees and to actively involve local communities in the integration process of third-country nationals must take into account the capacity for such efforts of the private sector in the Member State concerned, and calls for this category of measures to be based explicitly on the principle of voluntary action;
14. points out that, although the measures set out are intended to facilitate the integration of third-country nationals, they carry the risk of encouraging migration flows, and calls on the Commission to take the necessary steps to prevent this;
15. calls on the Commission to explore more deeply and spell out measures to adapt the services provided by authorities responsible for integration to the cultural particularity and educational background of the migrants and to decentralise such services by actively involving local authorities in the integration process;
16. notes that the administrative burden will increase, as the measures implemented to integrate third-country nationals will need to be assessed regularly;
17. notes that, at central government level, measures to support integration of third-country nationals are spread across several ministries, which requires interinstitutional coordination and additional financial costs as compared to the current administrative burden;
18. stresses that the pre-immigration measures should have priority, as in addition to providing information on moving to a Member State, they also have the advantage of allowing time to prepare for the reception of migrants and of enabling them to provide reasons for, and possibly to reconsider, their decision to leave;
19. calls on the Commission to insist on the mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications of third-country nationals who cannot produce any document proving their qualifications, in particular for beneficiaries of international protection.

This Decision was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies at its sitting of 4 October 2016 in compliance with Article 76(2) of the Romanian Constitution, republished.

President of the Chamber of Deputies,

Florin Iordache

Bucharest, 4 October 2016.

No 95