



Residence rights for refugees and people under international protection

Plenary sessions

Refugees and other beneficiaries of international protection may acquire long-term resident status in the EU, under new rules agreed by MEPs and the EU Council of Ministers and endorsed by Parliament on Tuesday.

These rules will give refugees the same rights as other third-country nationals with long-term resident status, including free movement within the EU and, under certain conditions, equal treatment with EU citizens in a wide range of economic and social areas.

This legislation, which amends an EU directive of 2003, will bring "direct benefit to all the beneficiaries of international protection who have been residing legally on the territory of the EU for more than 5 years, but currently have no entitlement to long-term resident status. It will bring an end to their differential treatment vis-à-vis other third country nationals, and will give them greater certainty about their situation in the EU", said Parliament's rapporteur Claude Moraes (S&D, UK), adding that it "benefits those who should have never been excluded from the Long Term Residence Directive".

Under Council Directive 2003/109/EC, which governs the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not currently entitled to long-term resident status. The amended directive would close this gap.

The new rules would enable beneficiaries of international protection who become long-term residents to take up residence in a Member State other than that in which they are recognised. Under certain conditions, they would also be entitled to equal treatment with citizens of the EU Member State in which they reside in a wide range of economic and social areas, including education and access to the labour market and social security benefits. Furthermore, the new rules also strengthen safeguards against "refoulement" (expulsion).

Transfer of responsibility for protection of beneficiaries of international protection is outside the scope of this directive.

Member States will have two years to comply with the new rules. The UK, Ireland and Denmark are opting out of this directive.

Contact :

Isabel Teixeira NADKARNI

LIBE

BXL: (+32) 2 28 32198

STR: (+33) 3 881 76758

PORT: (+32) 498 98 33 36

EMAIL: libe-press@europarl.europa.eu

Eimear Ní BHROIN

Dublin

STR: (+33) 3 881 64122

PORT: (+353) 868 559 423

EMAIL: Press-en@europarl.europa.eu