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EU asylum rules

Retrograde proposals on rights and criteria for asylum seekers

The European Commission today presented further proposals for reforming the EU's system of asylum rules, notably as regards the criteria under which asylum-seekers' applications for international protection are judged in the EU, and the rights and treatment they should receive. Commenting on the proposals, Green asylum spokesperson **Jean Lambert** MEP said:

"The EU and its member states have justifiably come under fire for their response to the refugee crisis but today's proposals from the Commission will do nothing to allay this. This latest step in the ongoing review of the EU's asylum rules represents further retrograde steps in a number of areas of asylum policy, notably regarding the rights of asylum seekers and an obsession with punitive measures.

"The framing of the issue we are being presented with needs to be turned on its head - people are fleeing because their lives are threatened and homes being destroyed, not because the EU's asylum system is gold-plated - it's NOT! During the previous review of the EU's asylum system we fought to try to ensure that a fair examination of the claim is at the core of the system. We need to reverse the obsession with administrative expediency and sanctions and, rather, ensure that asylum seekers have the information they need to be able to comply with their obligations and member states have the time to examine claims thoroughly.

"The appalling conditions people, including unaccompanied children, are living in in camps in northern France and elsewhere, are proof that the current EU asylum laws do not function. But the pressure on the system must in no way be used to justify less protection, fewer rights or inhuman treatment. We will continue to work for an asylum system which respects international law and human dignity for every individual."

The European Commission also presented proposals on a permanent resettlement system for refugees. Commenting on this, Green migration spokesperson **Judith Sargentini** said:

"The failure of most EU member states to live up to their responsibilities to relocate and resettle refugees has been a mark of shame for Europe and it is welcome that the Commission is trying to address this. However, it is unclear if this proposal will actually lead those recalcitrant EU governments to start accepting their responsibility in the absence of any political will. Proposing that the Council should set resettlement quotas also does not inspire confidence, as those EU member states that already have annual resettlement quotas often have them set at low levels (for example in Belgium and the Netherlands). It seems clear that those EU member states that have sought to actively block the relocation of asylum seekers within the EU will also not be willing to engage in this resettlement system."

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Responsible MEPs



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Judith Sargentini

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