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EU asylum rules

Massive missed opportunity, as MEPs prepare to sign off on EU asylum rules

The European Parliament's civil liberties committee last night voted on the Asylum Package of legislation updating the system governing asylum seekers and their treatment in the EU. MEPs will debate the package today in the European Parliament before it will be adopted, with no vote, tomorrow (1). The Greens have expressed disappointment with the package overall. Commenting ahead of the adoption, Green asylum and migration spokesperson **Jean Lambert** said:

"This final outcome is a massive missed opportunity for a common EU asylum policy. Instead of adopting a set of rules, based on a humanitarian and rights-based approach, national governments have worked to make as few upgrades as possible: the European Parliament has had to fight for almost every improvement

"While the review of the rules on which state is responsible for dealing with asylum seekers (Dublin III) has led to some improvements, it remains a wholly inappropriate regulatory system for dealing with asylum applications on an EU basis. The system, by which asylum seekers are sent back to the EU member state they first entered to have their asylum application dealt with, is based on a totally flawed premise – that every member state delivers a high-quality, consistent approach to claims. Despite some improvements - for example on legal assistance or the rights of unaccompanied minors - this flaw still remains. For many, they face a lottery as to whether or not their claim is properly dealt with, as recent evidence has made clear (2). In this revised regulation, there are no provisions to suspend transfers to country in breach of fundamental rights or EU law and there is no binding solidarity mechanism, with a view to ensuring individual member states are not left overwhelmed by asylum applications.

"Sadly, there was also no support for ensuring the conditions under which asylum seekers are received and housed meet basic standards and respect their rights. The result will mean that those who come to the EU seeking asylum will still often be treated like criminals: detained in prison-like centres for extended periods. The rules fail to provide basic guarantees for many detained asylum seekers and, while they do address conditions of detention, are riddled with exemptions.

"A truly common European approach to asylum, based on humane treatment of those who come to the EU to escape persecution, will sadly not result from the legislation that we are set to adopt."

(1) 3 of the 4 legislative files will be deemed adopted with no vote, following last night's vote in committee. A fourth piece of legislation on the EU's EURODAC asylum seeker fingerprint database will

be voted on by MEPs.

(2) The recent report by the JRS 'Protection Interrupted' clearly highlights these problems:
<http://www.detention-in-europe.org/>

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Responsible MEPs



Jean Lambert

Member

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