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Press release | 27.10.2011

EU asylum rules

First step towards strengthening refugees' rights as new legislation approved by MEPs

The European Parliament today adopted a legislative report on the qualification and status of third-country nationals, part of the so called 'asylum package' (1). After the vote, Green asylum and migration spokesperson **Jean Lambert**, who was the EP's draftsperson for the legislative report, said:

"The new EU rules adopted today represent a first step towards strengthening the rights of those in need of international protection across Europe. We hope that this breakthrough will provide momentum to ensure the other legislative proposals in the asylum package, which are currently in limbo in negotiations between the Parliament and the Council, will now be adopted.

"The way in which asylum claims are considered will be improved in a number of areas. Importantly, gender and sexual orientation must now be given due consideration as part of the decision on granting asylum. It has also been made clearer that the best interests of children need to be taken into account in all parts of the directive, including in considerations on entitlements and access to benefits. The rights of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are now aligned as regards access to education, healthcare, and access to the labour market, and residence permits will now also be more aligned.

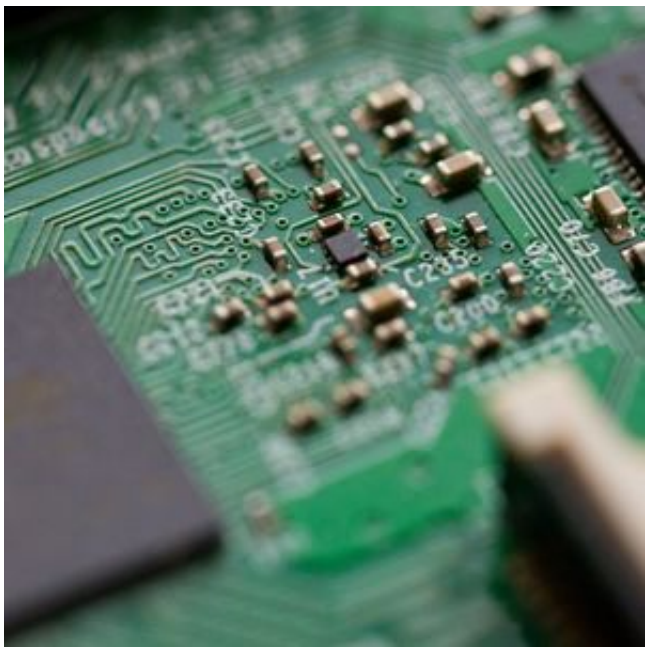
"Clearly, this final compromise is far from perfect. It should have made clear that the state is the sole actor of protection. We would also have preferred a broader definition of what constitutes a family. We hope this can be rectified the next time this legislation is amended. The revised directive takes small but important steps towards the achievement of a common European asylum system for 2012 and what we really want to see is a consistent and high quality implementation across all member states."

(1) The directive covers the rights of beneficiaries of international protection, so includes both refugees and also those granted subsidiary protection status. The 5 legislative proposals in the 'Asylum package comprise the Qualifications Directive, the Asylum Procedures Directive, the Reception Conditions Directive, the Dublin Regulation and the EURODAC Regulation.

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Responsible MEPs



Jean Lambert

Member

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