Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 1014 (1985)[1]

Entry visas required of Turkish nationals by certain Council of Europe member states

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its Recommendation 906 (1980), on compulsory visas for Turkish nationals, which urged those member states which had taken this measure to repeal it as being in conflict with the goal of the Council of Europe, which is to achieve a greater unity between the member states ;

2. Noting that :

2.1. since then, these measures have not been abolished, but have rather been copied by other member states ;

2.2. except for Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Iceland, the other member states which have introduced this requirement—namely Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland—are parties to European Agreement No. 25 on regulations governing the movement of persons between member states of the Council of Europe (1957) ;

3. Maintaining that the discriminatory requirement imposed on Turkish nationals is particularly unfair on :

3.1. workers already holding residence and work permits ;

3.2. couples of whom one is Turkish and their children, wishing to visit their families periodically in the host countries ;

3.3. persons whose occupation, whether as a member of a profession, administrator or in industry, commerce, culture or science, obliges them to travel abroad ;

4. Deploring the effects of these visas :

4.1. on freedom of movement, particularly in view of the underlying spirit of European Agreement No. 25 ;

4.2. on family reunion, which should be respected and facilitated in particular under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Article 6 of the European Social Charter and Article 12 of the European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers ;

4.3. on the often limited resources of the people concerned, particularly when they have to travel through three or four countries and above all if they are accompanied by their families ;

5. Anxious to prevent the Turkish people as a whole feeling rejected as a result of the discriminatory application of the visa requirement ;

6. Fearing that extremist movements may exploit this feeling, particularly among Turkish nationals living abroad, to increase the numbers of their supporters ;

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1. Assembly debate on 25 September 1985 (9th Sitting) (see Doc. 5451, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography). Text adopted by the Assembly on 25 September 1985 (9th Sitting).

7. Declaring that it would further the cause of democracy and human rights to adopt an enlightened policy of treating Turkish nationals living in the member countries in a welcoming manner, thereby strengthening their attachment to the values upheld by the Council of Europe ;

8. Recalling that European Agreement No. 25 on regulations governing the movement of persons between member states of the Council of Europe (1957) may not be suspended other than temporarily ;

9. Emphasising that :

9.1. the adoption of visas was prompted by a misuse of the right of entry, and that its Recommendation 990 (1984) on clandestine migration in Europe called for a policy on this question ;

9.2. events in recent years have not provided any significant evidence of a correlation between the presence of Turkish communities in the host countries and the grounds for temporary suspension laid down in Article 7 of European Agreement No. 25 on regulations governing the movement of persons between member states of the Council of Europe (1957), namely grounds relating to l'ordre public, security or public health ;

9.3. by working often for low wages, Turkish immigrants, like other migrant workers, have contributed to the development of the industrialised countries,

10. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the member governments concerned, whether or not they are parties to European Agreement No. 25 :

a. to abolish the visa requirement for legally resident migrant workers in one of the member states when they are in transit in their territories on the way back to their own country or to the host country ;

b. to abolish the visa requirement for the families of legally resident migrant workers ;

c. to introduce greater flexibility and standardisation into procedures for granting the visa :

1. to Turkish nationals married to nationals of the receiving countries, to children of Turkish nationality but whose father or mother is a national of the receiving country, to grandparents living in Europe or Turkey, so as not to impede contacts between persons with direct family ties ;

2. to persons whose industrial, commercial, cultural or scientific activities require them to travel, with a view, among other things, to extending the period of the visa's validity to at least three years and allowing multiple entries ;

d. to initiate the procedures necessary for all forms of visas for member states' nationals of legitimate status to be abolished in the future, in accordance with the spirit of European Agreement No. 25.