Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 13379
18 December 2013

The situation of Burmese refugees in Romania

Reply[1] to the Written question No. 642 (Doc. 13290)
Committee of Ministers

1. When considering the question put by the Honourable Parliamentarian, the Committee of Ministers was informed by the Romanian delegation that its authorities have taken all the necessary measures to assist the Myanmar refugees with a view to their integration and access to employment.

2. As stated, the refugees in question received financial support for a period of nine months, as provided for in domestic legislation for all persons in such a situation. In addition, according to the information provided by the Romanian authorities, a number of supplementary measures have been taken or offered to the members of the group. They were informed of the assistance available not only from central government institutions, but also by means of complementary activities undertaken within projects financed by the European Integration Fund, UNHCR Romania and local NGOs (Romanian language courses, counselling and support in order to access the labour market, job training, meetings with potential employers etc.).

3. The Romanian authorities have informed the Committee of Ministers that, despite these measures, the group of refugees in question showed little interest in obtaining employment, even declining in the first place to fulfil the legal procedure regarding the signing of the documents related to the accommodation, assistance asset and registering in the integration programme. They also showed little or no interest in the Romanian language courses offered with a view to assisting integration and access to employment.

4. Moreover, the Romanian authorities have pointed out that efforts were also made to diversify the job opportunities to which the Myanmar refugees could have had access, had they decided to pursue integration into the local labour market. The efforts included job offers paying a couple of times the minimum wage but they were declined by the members of the group, who claimed that their goal was to be resettled in other countries. In fact, most of the members of the group had left Romania as from June 2011.

5. Finally, the Romanian delegation has underlined that, despite the lack of interest towards integration in the Romanian society demonstrated so far by most of the Myanmar refugees, the national authorities continue to provide assistance to those who are still in Romania, employing all possibilities provided for in the relevant domestic legislation. These measures continue to include financial support, free accommodation and medical care, and support in view of accessing jobs.

6. As recalled in the reply to the previous question on this same question, Romania is bound by a number of Council of Europe and other international instruments with regard to refugees. In the light of the detailed information provided by the Romanian authorities, the Committee of Ministers considers that Romania is fully assuming its responsibilities in this area.

1. Adopted at the 1187th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (11 December 2013).