

10295/2/97
REV 2

LIMITE

ASIM 162

NOTE

from : Presidency

to : COREPER

Subject: Exchange of information in the fields of asylum and immigration

Under the Irish and Netherlands Presidencies, the working methods of both the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on Asylum (CIREA) and the Centre for Information, Discussion and Exchange on the Crossing of Frontiers and Immigration (CIREFI) were closely examined, particularly with a view to:

- improving the quality of information in the fields of asylum and immigration;
- reinforcing the system for exchanging this information, including the exchange of information with certain third countries in the context of the pre-accession strategy;
- specifying more precisely the tasks incumbent on the authorities of the Member States, the Presidency, the General Secretariat of the Council and the Commission.

A report on work still in progress and the guidelines emerging from it is contained in 7341/6/97 ASIM 73 REV 6.

It is suggested that the Permanent Representatives Committee ask the Council to:

- take note of the guidelines contained in the document referred to above;
- invite the Commission to ask its statistical office (Eurostat) to collect and process the statistical data in the fields of asylum and immigration which are currently exchanged within CIREA and CIREFI and to distribute them to the competent Council bodies. For this purpose, Member States will supply the Commission with the relevant statistical data. Experts of interested Member States, together with the Commission, will examine within the Council the method of collecting data in order to improve the comparability of the data as regards both content and frequency. The results of this examination will be submitted to the Council for approval ;
- take note that the Commission will guarantee the confidentiality of data at the request of a Member State ;
- agree that non-statistical confidential information will continue to be processed in the context of CIREFI or CIREA on the basis of the preparatory work to be carried out by the General Secretariat of the Council; the Commission will be fully associated with this work;
- take note that the Commission will examine the desirability of setting up a mechanism for collecting and disseminating information accessible to the public, in particular information and analysis emanating from universities, research institutes and non-governmental organizations;
- confirm the desirability of including in an appropriate manner in the information exchange system, inter alia, the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Cyprus in the context of the pre-accession strategy;
- agree that the subject of collection, processing, analysis and redistribution of information in the fields of asylum and immigration will be re-examined and, where necessary, adapted to the provisions of the Amsterdam Treaty as soon as it enters into force.