

European Training Foundation. Recast

2007/0163(COD) - 25/07/2007 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to make amendments to and recast Council Regulation (EEC) No 1360/90 establishing the European Training foundation (ETF.)

PROPOSED ACT: Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT: following its adoption in 1990 the ETF's founding Regulation has been amended three times (in 1994, 1998 and 2000) to extend the geographical scope of the ETF's activities to the TACIS, MEDA and CARDS countries respectively. Furthermore, the founding Regulation was amended a fourth time, in 2003, to bring it into line with the new Financial Regulation. The Regulation now requires further amendment. The Commission also recalls that, in 2005, it presented a draft Interinstitutional Agreement on the operating framework for the European Regulatory Agencies. (IIAOF). Although this framework, which is still at the proposal stage, is primarily intended to guide the Commission in setting up new decentralised agencies, its principles should also be taken into account when proposing significant amendments to the founding Regulations of existing agencies.

The Regulation requires further substantive amendment for the following principal reasons:

1) The ETF's **thematic remit** should be broadened, to cover human resources development (HRD), in particular education and training in a lifelong perspective, as well as related labour market issues. At present, the ETF's thematic remit, as described in its founding Regulation, is to contribute to development of vocational training systems in partner countries. In recent years education and training policy in the EU has switched from considering the different sectors separately to embracing a lifelong learning (LLL) perspective involving a holistic view of education and training as part of an entire learning system encompassing primary and secondary education, higher education, initial and continuing VET, and further and adult education. Accordingly, it is proposed that ETF's thematic remit should be broadened to cover human resources development, in particular education and training in a life-long learning perspective, and related labour market issues.

2) The ETF's **geographical scope** has to be redefined by reference to the new European Union's external relations policy instruments and priorities. It is proposed that the ETF's primary scope be defined by reference to the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA) and to the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). To enable the ETF to operate in accordance with external relations priorities in areas falling outside its primary geographical scope (such as the Central Asian countries), an ad hoc decision should be taken by the ETF Governing Board on proposal from the Commission.

Formerly "eligible countries" are from now on referred to as "partner countries";

3) Within this new working environment, the ETF's functions must be adapted accordingly while remaining focused on priorities clearly established in coordination with the Commission. The ETF's **functions** will be as follows:

- providing information, policy analysis and advice on human resources development issues and their links to sector policy objectives in the partner countries;
- supporting relevant stakeholders in partner countries to build capacity in human resources development;
- facilitating the exchange of information and experience among donors engaged in human resources development reform in partner countries;
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supporting the delivery of Community assistance to partner countries in the field of human resources development;

- disseminating information and encouraging networking and exchanges of experience and good practice between the EU and partner countries and amongst partner countries on human resources development issues;
- at the Commission's request, contributing to the analysis of the overall effectiveness of training assistance to partner countries.

4) The Foundation's **governing structures** need to be modernised, with a view to promoting effective decision-making and contributing to long-term convergence with other Agencies, as provided for in the IIAOFA. Accordingly, the number of representatives on the Governing Board will be limited to fifteen. The Commission and Council should designate an equal and limited number of members (six each). In the interest of transparency, the Commission will also designate three representatives of the partner countries as non-voting members of the Board. All members of the Board will be appointed on the basis of their experience of the sector concerned and with regard to gender equality for a five-year term (instead of the current three years). The proposal sets out the Governing Board's duties and tasks in a succinct and more coherent way.

The Commission considers that this is the occasion to use the recasting technique, as described in the Interinstitutional Agreement of 28 November 2001 on a more structured use of the recasting technique for legal act, in order to adopt a single legislative text which simultaneously makes the desired amendments, codifies those amendments with the unchanged provisions of the earlier acts and repeals those acts.