

Active European citizenship: Citizens for Europe, 2007-2013 programme; Commission implementing powers

2008/0029(COD) - 07/02/2008 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to reduce the time required for awarding grants covered by the “Europe for Citizens” programme, 2007-2013.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: this proposal relates to the legislative act establishing the [Europe for Citizens](#) programme 2007-2013 and its implementing powers. In order to implement the programme’s objectives, namely to support a wide range of activities promoting active European citizenship, the Commission relies on its implementing rights as expressed through “comitology” procedures. This is particularly pertinent in the case of selecting grant projects following calls for proposals.

To recall, the Commission’s right of implementation is set out, *inter alia*, in Decision No 1999/468/EC. In this Decision a number of procedures are set out including the “management” procedure and the “consultation” procedure. Both of these procedures involve the participation of the European Parliament. Under the consultation procedure, the Parliament has one month in which to examine a draft measure before the Commission makes a formal decision.

Under the terms of the Europe for Citizens programme, the “management” procedure is applied in cases relating to the award of large sums only. In other words all operating grants, multi-annual twinning agreements and high-visibility events. In principle, all other decisions are not subject to a comitology procedure. Wording in the Decision, however, implies that the “consultation” procedure be applied to all selection decisions. The current wording can cause serious problems by delaying the adoption of decisions – some times by up to two to three months. Yet, in general, the projects affected are of a short-time frame only.

With Parliamentary consent, temporary solutions have been found in order to reduce the time required for scrutiny. Nevertheless, it is important that a long-term solution is put in place in order to prevent unnecessary delays.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal, therefore, is to amend Council Decision 1904/2006/EC, setting up the Europe for Citizens programme, in order to find a definitive solution.

The wording of the amendments has been framed so that the consultative procedure will disappear and be replaced, on the basis of a Commission declaration, with a procedure whereby the Commission provides the programme committee and the European Parliament with immediate information on the selection decisions which it adopts. This arrangement is fully in line with Parliament’s original intention when the Decision was being negotiated.

Upon approval, the amended Decision will make it possible to reduce, by two to three months, the time required for grants to be awarded and to ensure effective implementation of the activities and measures covered by the programme. The programme committee and the European Parliament will be informed immediately of the selection decisions. It will also help strengthen the principles of simplification and proportionality.

A similar revision of the basic instruments establishing programmes on (i) culture and (ii) youth and (iii) education, is planned in parallel with this proposal.