

European Training Foundation. Recast

2007/0163(COD) - 22/05/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 292 votes to 22, with 230 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the recast of the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a European Training Foundation.

The report had been tabled for consideration in plenary by Bernard **LEHIDEUX** (ALDE, FR) on behalf of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs.

The majority of the amendments – adopted under 1st reading of the codecision procedure – were the result of a compromise between the Parliament and the Council:

- **human capital development:** better consideration shall be given to the importance of human capital development throughout the proposal by making it one of the main objectives of the agency (the text defines the meaning of “human capital development” in relation to the agency’s objectives);
- **increased oversight of the functions of the Foundation: a Governing Board represented by members nominated by the Parliament:** the Parliament requests that it be more involved in the supervision of the agency’s functions. This is why the **plenary** adopted, with a very small majority, an EPP amendment (246 votes for, 242 against and 38 abstentions) requesting that the **Governing Board of the Foundation** be composed of representatives of the Member States following the rotation stipulations of the Treaty of Lisbon regarding the appointment of Commissioners, three representatives of the Commission, as well as **three experts appointed by the European Parliament**. This Board shall also include three representatives of the partner countries who may attend meetings as observers. The Member States and the Commission shall each appoint their own representatives and alternates to the Governing Board whereas the representatives of the partner countries shall be appointed by the Commission on the basis of a list of candidates proposed by those countries and of their experience. The representatives of the Commission shall have one vote between them (whereas the representatives of the Member States shall each have one vote);
- **third countries:** the scope of cooperation with third countries shall be enlarged (not limited to countries involved in the Neighbourhood Policy or pre-accession programmes): other countries may therefore be associated with the actions of the Foundation. These countries would be designated by decision of the Governing Board based on a specific procedure, and from a list of countries covered by a Community instrument or international agreement that includes a component of human capital development;
- **assistance provided by the Foundation:** the text better defines the type of assistance that the Foundation would provide (including: adapting to industrial changes, improving continuous training in the countries concerned, encouraging mobility, stimulating cooperation between educational establishments and firms, stimulating reforms in education and training systems, developing exchanges of information and experience on issues common to the training systems of the Member States);
- **promoting knowledge and analysis of skills needs:** knowledge and analysis of skills needs in **national and local labour markets** shall be promoted among the main functions of the Foundation;
- **avoiding overlap:** all efforts must be made to avoid the overlap of activities with other Community bodies, including CEDEFOP, by seeking to identify all complementarity in activities undertaken; it is planned that representatives of social partners at European level and international organisations involved in training will participate in the activities of the Foundation, if applicable;

- **the Director's mandate:** the Director of the Foundation shall be nominated by the Governing Board for a period of **five years**, on the basis of a list of **at least 3 candidates** presented by the Commission; before being nominated, the candidates shall be invited to make a statement before the relevant parliamentary committee(s) and to answer questions posed by the committee members;
- **work programme:** a four-year multiannual work programme for the Foundation shall be established, on the basis of experience acquired in education and training within the Community; an annual work programme shall be established on the basis of this multiannual work programme;
- **annual report and annual activity report:** the Governing Board of the Foundation shall forward an annual activity report to the competent bodies of the European Parliament. The Director shall also present the Foundation's annual report before the relevant committees of the European Parliament and preparatory bodies of the Council.

It should be noted that the adoption of the amendment in plenary on the composition of the Governing Board challenges the negotiated agreement with the Council under 1st reading. A 2nd reading will be needed therefore.