

Financing instrument for development cooperation: banana accompanying measures

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The Committee on Development adopted the report by Charles GOERENS (ALDE, LU) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 1905/2006 establishing a financing instrument for development cooperation.

The committee considers that the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council, by drastically reducing the margin under the ceiling of heading 4 of the multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2007-2013, does not leave sufficient room for manoeuvre to face and to react adequately to a potential upcoming crisis.

Members feel that, due to the long-standing issue concerning trade in bananas, the proposed measures could have been integrated at an earlier stage into the MFF. They reiterate their conviction that **any new instrument should not be financed through redeployment** as this would jeopardise the existing priorities.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position at first reading under the ordinary legislative procedure (formerly known as the codecision procedure) should be to amend the Commission proposal as follows:

Combat against poverty: the report points out that EU development aid must be used to combat poverty by improving the living standards and conditions of farmers and the people concerned, such as small business, respecting working, as well as environmental, standards, including those regarding the use and exposure to pesticides.

Effectiveness of aid: the Commission must be extremely careful to envisage the economic diversification of banana-dependent areas only where such an option is mentioned in multi-annual national strategy papers. Members believe that the criteria for the apportioning of assistance must be transparent. They should therefore be weighted to increase the transparency of the allocation of assistance. In addition to this, the allocation should be based on countries' requirements. Resources should therefore be targeted, as a priority, at ACP countries that actually wish to retain their banana sector in view of the role it plays in the sustainable development of their country.

Aid strategies: multiannual support strategies for the banana accompanying measures should, in particular, include:

- an updated environmental profile paying due attention to the country's banana sector inter alia focusing on pesticides;
- information on the achievements of past banana support programmes;
- indicators to assess progress in relation to disbursement conditions, when budget support will be chosen as the form of financing;
- the expected results of the assistance;
- a time schedule of support activities and of expected disbursements for each recipient country;
- the ways in which progress will be achieved and monitored in meeting internationally-agreed ILO core labour standards and appropriate occupational safety and health conventions as well as relevant internationally agreed core environmental standards.

The support strategies shall be subject to an independent ex ante review and, if necessary, an ad hoc review.

Delegated acts: Members consider that it is vital that Parliament should be able to exercise all the powers of democratic scrutiny it currently enjoys, including the possibility opened up by the Lisbon Treaty for delegating to the Commission the power to adopt non-legislative acts of general application to supplement or amend certain non-essential elements of the legislative act, including multi-annual strategy papers and programming documents relating to the Banana Accompanying Measures (BAMs).