EU/Switzerland Agreement: participation of Switzerland in the ‘Youth in Action' programme and in the action programme in the field of lifelong learning (2007-2013)

2010/0231(NLE) - 19/01/2010 - Document attached to the procedure

This document takes in the text of the agreement between the European Union and Switzerland on the extension to this country of the Youth in Action programme and in the action programme in the field of lifelong learning. It is the result of negotiations which resulted in the initialling of the draft agreement on 6 August 2009.

The agreement provides specifically for its provisional application pending the completion of the procedures necessary for its ratification or its conclusion by the parties.

Its main provisions are as follows:

Duration of the agreement: the agreement is concluded for the duration of the programmes in progress. Nevertheless, if the Community decides to extend the duration of the Programmes without changing them, this Agreement will also be automatically extended accordingly. During the extension, Switzerland shall make an annual financial contribution identical to its financial contribution for 2013.

Terms and conditions for the participation of Switzerland in the programmes in question: an annex (Annex I) lays down the main conditions governing Switzerland’s participation in the Youth in Action programme and in the action programme in the field of lifelong learning. Switzerland shall:

- be responsible for establishing or designating, and monitoring, an appropriate structure (Swiss National Agency) for the coordinated management of the implementation of the Programmes' actions at national level,
- assume responsibility for the sound management by the Swiss National Agency of the appropriations paid to it as aid for projects, and
- take any measures necessary to ensure the appropriate financing, auditing and financial monitoring of the Swiss National Agency, which shall receive from the Commission a contribution to its management and implementation costs.

Switzerland shall take all other necessary steps for the efficient running of the Programmes at national level

Switzerland’s financial contribution for its participation in the programmes: to participate in the Programmes, Switzerland shall make an annual financial contribution to the general budget of the European Communities, in accordance with the arrangements set out in Annex II of the agreement. The terms and conditions for the submission, assessment and selection of applications from eligible institutions, organisations and individuals from Switzerland shall be the same as those applicable to eligible institutions, organisations and individuals from the Community.

In accordance with Annex II of the agreement, Switzerland’s contribution will be as follows:

- in terms of a financial contribution to the Youth in action programme, Switzerland shall contribute EUR 1.7 million in 2011, EUR 1.8 million in 2012 and EUR 1.9 million in 2013 to the Community budget;
- in terms of a financial contribution to the action programmes in the field of lifelong learning, Switzerland shall contribute EUR 14.2 million in 2011, EUR 14.9 million in 2012 and EUR 15.6 million in 2013.

Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by representatives and experts from Switzerland for taking part as observers in the work of the committees or in other meetings related to the implementation of the Programmes shall be refunded by the Commission on the same basis and according to the same procedures as for the representatives and experts from the Member States of the Community.

Measures to facilitate free movement of students: within the framework of existing provisions, to facilitate the free movement and residence of students, teachers, trainees, instructors, university administrators, young people and other eligible persons moving between Switzerland and the Member States of the Community for the purpose of participating in activities covered by this agreement.

Monitoring and evaluation of programmes: the participation of Switzerland in the Programmes shall be subject to constant monitoring by the Commission and Switzerland in partnership. Switzerland shall submit the necessary reports to the Commission and be involved in other specific measures taken by the Community in that context. Agreements between the Commission and the Swiss National Agency or Swiss beneficiaries and between the Swiss National Agency and Swiss beneficiaries shall be based on the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities and on the detailed rules for its implementation, in particular regarding grant awards and the conclusion of agreements. These provisions shall apply to Swiss participants in the same way as they apply to all participants in the Programmes. Additional rules concerning financial control, recovery and other antifraud measures are laid down in Annex III of the agreement.