External actions: financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories

2009/0059(COD) - 26/01/2011

The Committee on International Trade adopted the recommendation for second reading contained in the report drafted by Helmut SCHOLZ (GUE/NGL, DE) on the Council position at first reading with a view to the adoption of a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 1934/2006 establishing a financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised and other high-income countries and territories.

It recommended that the European Parliament adopts its position at second reading under the ordinary legislative procedure, amending the Council position at first reading as follows:

Delegated acts: following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament is now fully recognised as co-legislator alongside the Council on virtually all legislation. Members consider that this should be reflected in the area of the implementation of external cooperation financial instruments.

During the first reading in October 2010, Parliament expressed its favour for the application of the "delegated acts" procedure for the financing instruments for external assistance.

The delegated acts procedure significantly strengthens Parliament's powers: Parliament's veto right allows it to block a draft measure it objects against, and requires the Commission to present an amended proposal.

Faced with the rejection of the Parliament’s position by the Council, Members recommend representing, at second reading, the requests formulated at first reading:

- the Commission should be empowered to adopt delegated acts in accordance with Article 290 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in respect of multiannual cooperation programmes, as these programmes supplement Regulation (EC) No 1934/2006 and are of general application;

- annual action programmes shall be adopted by the Commission taking into account the opinions of the European Parliament and of the Council. This procedure needs not be used for amendments to action programmes, such as those making technical adjustments, extending the implementation period, reassigning funds between the planned operations within the forecast budget, or increasing or reducing the size of the budget by less than 20 % of the initial budget, provided these amendments are consistent with the initial objectives set out in the action programmes;

- the Commission shall send the evaluation reports to the European Parliament and to the Council for information.

Other amendments focus on the duration of the delegation of power, as well as the conditions to be respected by the delegations.

Lastly, Members call on the Commission to provide the budgetary authority with detailed information on all budget lines and the annual appropriations to be used for financing the measures under this Regulation. Those appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the limits of the financial

framework. Care should also be taken to ensure that the industrialised and other high-income countries and territories listed in Annex I are not placed at a disadvantage by the application of this Regulation to the partner countries listed in Annex II.