

Integrated maritime policy: programme to support the further development

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The Council **took note of a report on progress** in work on a draft regulation aimed at establishing a programme to support the further development of an integrated maritime policy.

The position of Member States in relation to the legislative proposal may be summarised as follows: an **overall consensus** was reached on the majority of the Articles. The main concerns expressed by Member States relate to the **budgetary aspects and to the committee procedure**.

Budgetary aspects: a majority of delegations have reservations regarding the proposed amount of EUR 50 million. One group of Member States proposes EUR 20 million. Another group of Member States can accept the amount of EUR 50 million. Some delegations can also accept the latter amount provided that the examination procedure is applied. Other delegations can be flexible on the amount provided that it is met through reallocation. The Commission proposes using the margins of Heading 2, while all Member States strongly insist on financing the Programme through reallocation.

The Presidency stressed on several occasions that this Regulation shall be without prejudice to the future decision of the budgetary authorities regarding the source of the amount.

Nevertheless, the Presidency considers it necessary to reflect the strong position of the Council on this issue and therefore proposed inserting recital (7c), bearing in mind the forthcoming negotiations with the European Parliament. The Commission opposes this insertion, considering that the decision on the source of funding belongs to the budgetary authorities and that the legislative and budgetary procedures should not be mixed up.

Concerning the financial envelope for technical assistance, the Council requested the introduction of a ceiling to be determined once agreement is reached on the total amount. One delegation proposed putting the ceiling at 1%. Commission opposes the introduction of the ceiling, arguing that it is not compatible with the Financial Regulation.

Committee procedure: all delegations objected to the use of the advisory procedure as proposed by the Commission. The Council strongly argues for the examination procedure to be used.