

South-east Europe, western Balkans: Community assistance, CARDS programme, 2000-2006

2000/0111(CNS) - 05/12/2000 - Final act

PURPOSE : to provide a new legal framework for assistance to the countries of the Former Yugoslavia and Albania (CARDS Programme). **COMMUNITY MEASURE** : Council Regulation 2666/2000/EC on assistance for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, repealing Regulation 1628/96/EC and amending Regulations 3906/89/EEC and 1360/90/EEC and Decisions 97/256/EC and 1999/311/EC. **CONTENT** : the CARDS Regulation aims to establish a joint legal framework for the assistance to the Balkans (Serbia included) in place of multiple instruments used until present, notably the OBNOVA and PHARE programmes. A financial reference amount for the application of this programme for the period 2000-2006 shall be EUR 4 650 million. The main purpose of the Community assistance is to support participation by the recipient countries in the stabilisation and association process. The assistance shall be for : - the development of the institutional and legislative framework, - reconstruction, aid for the return of refugees and displaced persons, and stabilisation of the region; - sustainable economic development and market-economy-oriented economic reform; - the development of closer relations among recipient countries, between them and the EU and between them and the accession countries; - fostering regional, transnational, cross-border and interregional cooperation. It should be noted that the respect for the principles of democracy and the rule of law and for human and minority rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element for the application of this Regulation and a precondition for the eligibility for Community assistance. Special attention shall be paid to the regional dimension of Community assistance, with a view to stepping up regional cooperation. In order to promote cooperation in the region, the regulation provides for the participation in invitations to tender and contracts, as well as, participation by countries which are recipients under the TACIS and MEDA programmes on a case-by-case basis. The assistance shall be provided as: - a strategic framework ('Country Strategic Paper'), for the period 2000-2006, which shall serve to set the long-term objectives for assistance and priority fields of action in recipient countries and annual action programmes, based on multiannual indicative programmes drawn up for three year periods, for each country receiving Community assistance. Such programmes shall describe the reforms to be carried out by partners in priority sectors and include an assessment of progress made in doing so and also indicative amounts are also given. In view of the political situation in some areas (Kosovo in particular) and the nature of various entities that have responsibility for implementing assistance there (UNMIK or the Office for the High Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina), it is desirable to provide that the assistance shall be supplied in some cases directly to recipients other than the State. The Council shall review this Regulation before 31.12.2004. The Commission shall submit to the Council an evaluation report of CARDS not later than 30.07.2000, together with proposals for the future of this Regulation and for any amendments needing to be made to it. It should also be noted that in the light of the scope of this Regulation, consequent changes will have to be made to the PHARE regulation and the TEMPUS III Decision. **ENTRY INTO FORCE** : 07.12.00, the same date that the OBNOVA Regulation 1628/96/EC is abrogated. The Regulation is applicable until 31.12.2006. CNS000111 05/12/00 DAF EN **PURPOSE** : to provide a new legal framework for assistance to the countries of the Former Yugoslavia and Albania (CARDS Programme). **COMMUNITY MEASURE** : Council Regulation 2666/2000/EC on assistance for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, repealing Regulation 1628/96/EC and amending Regulations 3906/89/EEC and 1360/90/EEC and Decisions 97/256/EC and 1999/311/EC. **CONTENT** : the CARDS Regulation aims to establish a joint legal framework for the assistance to the Balkans (Serbia included) in place of multiple instruments used until present, notably the OBNOVA and PHARE programmes. A financial reference amount for the application of this programme for the period 2000-2006 shall be EUR 4 650 million. The main purpose of the Community assistance is to support participation by the recipient countries in the stabilisation and association process. The assistance shall be for : - the development of the institutional

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