

# Youth: Community action programme 2000-2004

1998/0197(COD) - 28/06/1999 - Council position

The Council's common position is based on the Commission's amended proposal adopted following the European Parliament's opinion at the first reading. However, there remains one area of discord between the Commission's amended proposal and the common position: the budget. The compromise proposed by the Presidency (350 million euros) was unanimously accepted. The Commission considers that this figure does not adequately reflect the priority given to the area of education and training in Agenda 2000. In the light of the Agenda 2000 priorities, the Commission's proposal envisaged funding of 600 million euros over five years and the Parliament increased this to 800 million. The following amendments put forward by the European Parliament and adopted in the Commission's amended proposal were incorporated in the common position: - the contribution of the programme to the struggle for respect for human rights and to combating excessive nationalism; - making the practical arrangements user-friendly and geared to young people, with a view to making the programme more accessible; - the need to respect the specific character and features of each programme (Education, Training and Youth) while retaining overall consistency with other Community activities; - special efforts to benefit small local organisations; - the introduction of a degree of flexibility concerning the age group; - the importance of ensuring that the European Voluntary Service does not replace mainstream jobs. The Council, furthermore, accepted, with the agreement of the Commission, Parliament's amendment inverting actions 1 and 2 of the programme (European Voluntary Service and Youth for Europe). The Council did not accept amendments regarding the following: - a stronger appeal to Member States to remove obstacles to access to the programme; - the protection of participants' rights concerning social protection and access to medical care; - the programme's focus on active citizenship; - the possible coordination of youth information co-operation projects with similar measures in the Socrates and Leonardo programmes; - the introduction of a structure designed to derive maximum benefit from young people's projects, to collect information on young people, and to establish a 'Young People in Europe' Internet site. The Council also changed the type of committee that would manage the programme: management committee of type IIb of the 1987 'comitology' decision, instead of a committee of type IIa.