

Energy and sustainable development: multiannual programme "Intelligent Energy for Europe", 2003-2006

2002/0082(COD) - 03/02/2003 - Council position

The Council accepted 22 out of the 39 amendments proposed by the European Parliament. The Council rejected the 17 other amendments. The Austrian delegation voted against this common position. The main changes introduced by the Council into the draft Decision concern the financial reference amount for the implementation of the programme. The Council considers a reference amount of EUR 190 million to be appropriate for the period 2003 to 2006, that is EUR 25 million lower than the Commission's proposal. The indicative breakdown of the budget for the four specific fields on the basis of the new reference amount is given: - the improvement of energy efficiency and the rational use of energy (EUR 66.3 millions); - new and renewable energy sources and diversification of energy production (EUR 76 million); - energy aspects of transport (EUR 31 million); - promotion of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency at international level, particularly in the developing countries (EUR 16.7 million). Furthermore, with a view to allocating a certain flexibility on this reference amount, the Council introduced a review clause which allows for the possibility of revising the programme's budget after the first half of the programme, based on a report which the Commission is due to carry out before the end of September 2004. Other changes aim: - to specify certain groups of developing countries in view of their participation in the COOPENER programme; - to clarify the relation between the four specific fields and the so-called key actions in order to make it clear that both actions can be funded under the Intelligent Energy Programme; - to include a reference, in addition to the Commission proposed wording for the objective of the actions or projects, to the reorganisation of structures and instruments for sustainable energy development, to the dissemination of best practices and new cross-cutting technologies and of the dissemination of results of the actions and projects; - to include an amendment that specifies that before putting forward new proposals on a subsequent programme, the Commission should provide and conclude on, an external evaluation of the implementation of the Intelligent Energy Programme, to be carried out by independent experts; - to clarify that all candidate countries are treated on an equal footing as regards their participation in the Intelligent Energy Programme. The Council believes that to a large extent the common position meets the substance of most of the wishes expressed by the European Parliament and that will contribute to the balanced achievement of security of supply, competitiveness and environmental protection.