Development cooperation, women participation: integration of gender issues

1997/0151(SYN) - 30/03/1998 - Council position

In its common position on the proposal for a regulation on integrating gender issues into development cooperation, the Council maintained the basic structure of the Commission proposal. However, it did not follow the Commission with regard to: - the length of the regulation: the Commission considered that the type and nature of the interventions justified an open-ended regulation and did not therefore propose a time limit. The Council preferred to set a limit of 5 years from 1999 to 2003, with the Commission to present an evaluation of the regulation and propose any amendments needed after 3 years' application; - the inclusion of a financial reference amount in the text: the Council disagreed with the Commission and decided to include the sum of ECU 25 million for this initiative, i.e. an annual budget of ECU 5 million for the period in question; - comitology: the Commission proposal made provision for an opinion on actions in receipt of more than ECU 2 million to be given by the ALA, MED and EDF committees under the advisory committee procedure. The Council was in favour of a type IIb committee and a lower threshold of ECU 1 million; - certain aspects of the activities to be implemented and the tasks to be entrusted to the Commission: in particular, the Council included a new article authorising the Commission to organise meetings on gender issues with representatives of the Member States and recipient countries. Of the 9 European Parliament amendments retained by the Commission in its amended proposal (of the 17 adopted at first reading), the Council retained 7 relating mainly to: - coordination with other development cooperation instruments, especially national and inter-governmental instruments; - the type of gender issues to be integrated into development cooperation policies and actions; - the increase in Community interventions under this policy between now and the year 2003; - the reference to legislative acts seeking to safeguard equal opportunities for men and women; - the training needed at Commission level and in developing countries on these issues; - the inclusion among the beneficiaries of certain associations working in the public interest.