Education and training systems: eLearning programme 2004-2006 for integration of information technologies

2002/0303(COD) - 16/06/2003 - Council position

In its common position the Council has approved (the German delegation voting against) the Commission's proposal in principle, while making certain amendments which it thought desirable, and which in the majority of cases are in line with the European Parliament's opinion as well as the Commission's amended proposal. The Council considers that its common position reflects a good balance between the various actions envisaged in the context of the contribution of eLearning to enhancing the European dimension of education and promoting cooperation between Community programmes and instruments as well as Member State actions. It will moreover complement existing programmes and contribute to the preparation of future instruments in the field of education and training. Concerning the amendments made by the Council to the Commission's proposal, these are follows: - role of eLearning : the Council has introduced a new recital which stresses the significance of the programme both in complementing existing programmes and in helping to prepare the new generation of education and training programmes; - co-operation, complementarity and synergy : with a view to greater clarity and concision with respect to the above considerations, the former articles 4, 7 and 8 have been merged into two: Article 4 (Implementation of the programme and co-operation with the Member States) and Article 7 (consistency and complementarity); - funding : the Council is of the opinion that a financial framework of EUR 33 million would enable the programme to meet its objectives, while bearing in mind the need to exercise budgetary restraint; - budget distribution : in relation to distribution, a greater proportion of the budget (45%) has been allocated to eTwinning and teacher training, while "promotion of digital literacy" (initially designated "fighting the digital divide") has been allocated 10% as this action is considered as essentially exemplary; - promoting digital literacy : this action line has been clarified and simplified in accordance with the new budget distribution; - European Virtual Campuses - this Action Line has been consolidated into 3 actions. The concept of developing existing instruments has been preferred to referring to the "Bologna Process" as such since this is an ongoing process and susceptible to change; - eTwinning for primary and secondary schools in Europe and promotion of teachers' training: the Council has introduced a series of amendments to reinforce the aspect of eTwinning between schools. It has also underlined the importance of e-learning in the context of teacher training; - transversal actions and monitoring of eLearning : this Action Line has been redrafted in the interests of clarity. For example, the organisation of an annual conference was not considered necessary, in view of the relatively short duration of the programme. The role of international projects can be considered as of general relevance in the context of the programme. As regards the amendments not accepted by the Council, these refer to : - the establishment of a link between the financial andadministrative basis of the programme and the preparatory actions; - references to gender equality, disability and geographical location; - the specification of rural areas; - the promotion of high quality software; - long-term sustainability of strategic pilot projects; - the design of projects related to translating and interpreting languages; - participation in international projects.