

European Agency for Reconstruction: extending assistance to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM)

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The committee adopted the report by Joost LAGENDIJK (Greens/EFA, NL) amending the proposal under the consultation procedure. At a discussion with members of the committee, Commissioner Chris PATTEN stressed the need to include FYROM so as to enable the EU to act more swiftly and effectively on the ground. However, MEPs told the Commissioner they were concerned whether such a move would be compatible with the current process of devolving the Commission's policy tasks in the region and with the powers given to the EC delegations in the Balkans. The committee therefore felt that extending the mandate of the Reconstruction Agency to include FYROM should only be provisional. It also asked the Commission to supply by 31 January 2002 a detailed report on its strategy for the management of Community assistance to the Western Balkans. Thought should also be given to turning the Agency into an Agency for Reconstruction and Development.