

European Training Foundation: extension to the Mediterranean countries (2nd amend. Regul. 1360/90/EEC)

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The ESC has consistently maintained that cooperation on vocational training with third countries is strategically valuable. In the Member States, the development of differing, but high-quality, training systems has been, and continues to be, a key factor in economic growth. The Committee therefore welcomes the Commission proposal and feels certain that this Foundation can contribute significantly to joint development in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The task of the Foundation is not specifically to manage programmes, but rather to support their implementation, assessing requirements so as to frame forward-looking and appropriate training schemes and far-sighted and specific intervention strategies. The ESC is particularly interested in the Foundation's activities and the proposal in question given the role that it plays in the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and because it has been calling on all the EU institutions for some time to be more coherent, open and committed to promoting the participation of the Mediterranean partner countries in Community activities and projects relating to training. The ESC is also prepared henceforward to contribute to the subsequent activities of the Foundation, and would ask the Commission not only to forward its annual report, but also to routinely request the ESC's opinion on this report.