

South-east Europe, western Balkans: Community assistance, CARDS programme, 2000-2006

2000/0111(CNS) - 10/05/2000 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for assistance for Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (CARDS Programme), and amending Regulation 3906/89/EEC. **CONTENT** : the regulatory framework for assistance to this region must be consolidated. At present, assistance to some of the countries is provided under the Obnova Regulation, certain others receive assistance under the Phare Regulation, and some receive assistance under both programmes. This has caused many operational problems, a fact to which the attention of the European Parliament and the Court of Auditors has been drawn. Phare currently serves the new priorities of enlargement and is no longer suited to the Western Balkans. This proposal represents a single legal framework for providing assistance to the five countries in question, and repeals the Obnova Regulation 1628/96/EC and the provisions in the annex to the Regulation 3906/89/EEC (Phare) applicable to those countries. The main objective of any assistance under this proposal will be to support participation by the receiving countries in the Stabilisation and Association Process and close regional cooperation. This means concentrating the assistance (in the form of investment and institution-building) on building up and modernising institutions so as to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and respect for human and minority rights. These are conditions for assistance, and other political conditions will also apply.