Judicial cooperation: exchange programme for legal practitioners, Grotius II general and criminal

2000/0339(CNS) - 14/12/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to present a Commission proposal for a Council decision establishing a second phase of the programme of incentives and exchanges, training and cooperation for legal practitioners (Grotius II - General and Criminal). CONTENT: On 31.12.2000, the multiannual financing programme, adopted through Joint Action on the basis of Article K.3 of the Treaty on European Union will expire. Against this background, Grotius II is expected to pursue the specific objectives of cooperation between legal practitioners, increasing the knowledge of the different legal and judicial systems and facilitating judicial cooperation between the Member States. The specific objectives of the programme are the following: - preparation of projects in the field of criminal judicial cooperation; - help in implementing the instruments adopted; - support for better mutual understanding on general topics of shared interest for the Member States; - local ad hoc projects with the aim of improving cooperation on the ground; - setting up networks between certain organisations and professions. Grotius II is renewed for the period 01.01.2001 to 31.12.2002 and may be extended beyond that date. The main provisions in the proposed Council decision relate to access to the programme, activities, implementation, manangement and its evaluation. With regard to the financing of the programme, the annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the limits of the financial perspective. The proportion of financial support from the Community budget shall not exceed 70% of the cost of the project. In certain cases however, measures can be financed to 100%, up to a ceiling of 10% of the total financial package allocated annually to the programme for each of the two categories. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the programme for the period 2001 to 2002 shall be EUR 4 million. Furthermore, the Commission shall undertake each year an evaluation of the actions carried out in implementing the programme for the previous year. In conclusion, each year the Commission shall report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the programme. The first report shall be presented before 31.07.2002.