Cooperation EC/Latin America and Asian countries: aid to uprooted people after 31/12/2000

2000/0338(COD) - 20/12/2000 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to implement a programme of support and assistance to uprooted people. CONTENT : the general objective of this proposal is to implement a programme of support and assistance to uprooted people to contribute to the urgent requirements not covered by humanitarian aid and for the longer term realisation of projects and action programmes aimed at the self-sufficiency and integration or reintegration of such people. The cooperation and development policy referred to in Article 177 of the Treaty establishing the European Community highlights the need to help people who have felt obliged to leave their place of residence as a result of serious threats to their personal safety. By the same token, it is essential that aid instruments be developed that address the needs of host communities or those in places to which refugees return, within or outside the country concerned. The aims of the budget headings B7-302 and B7-312 are precisely that: to help uprooted people (refugees, displaced persons and returnees) in Asia and Latin America by creating the best possible conditions for integration. The overall trend in recent years has been to fewer major migrations, due to saturation of third countries' ability to take in refugees, the chief consequence of which has been that operations have been geared more to return, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. With the spread of democracy and peace in Latin America, the relevant budget heading (B7-312) has not been used in 2000 and is very unlikely to be used in the years to come. However, it seems prudent to retain the same geographical coverage for the Regulation concerned so that the Community can still act in the event of crisis-related migration. Operations under this Regulation belong basically to the intermediate, rehabilitation phase in the emergency aid/rehabilitation strategy for people who are or have been affected by internal or external conflict. In the context, coordination, consistency and complementarity with other aid instruments and the policies of Member States and the international community remains essential. Having expired on 31 December 1999, Regulation 443/97/EC was extended until 31 December 2000 by Regulation 1880/2000. There is now need for a new legal instrument enabling operations to continue after 31 December 2000 for an indefinite period.