

Youth: Community action programme 2000-2004

1998/0197(COD) - 19/10/1999

The recommendation for second reading (codecision procedure) by Lissy GRÖNER (PES, D) on the Council's common position was adopted almost unanimously by the committee. The main sticking point remained the budget, just as at first reading. Like the Commission, Parliament considers the budget proposal by the Council of EUR 350m for five years to be inadequate in view of the emphasis on education and training in Agenda 2000. To make the programme more effective the committee voted for it to have a seven year duration like Socrates and Leonardo. This would require an increase in the budget to EUR 980m as well as changes in the monitoring and evaluation dates. While welcoming in particular the proposal to allow age limits for projects under the programme to be adjusted according to circumstances, the committee wanted to ensure that the programme was adequately publicised so that participation would not be restricted to those who belong to youth organisations. It called on Member States to remove legal and administrative obstacles in order to improve access to the programme for young people. There would not be any harmonisation of social rights but the committee did want social welfare and medical assistance to be made available to participants in the Youth programme, as is already the case with students taking part in exchange programmes. One amendment also dealt with the commitology procedure. Lastly, the committee stressed the importance of fostering active citizenship, setting up a system for collecting information about young people and establishing a "Young People in Europe" internet site managed by the Commission.