

Decentralised development cooperation: extension until 31 December 2003

2001/0243(COD) - 23/10/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to extend and amend Council Regulation 1659/98/EC on decentralised cooperation.

CONTENT : decentralised cooperation is at a watershed. It is time to move from an experimental phase to one of consolidation of the concept on a larger scale in the context of official cooperation. Nevertheless, it is important that a budget instrument be maintained, coordinated with the EDF and other instruments of cooperation with the developing countries acting principally as a catalyst for the change of scale and for cases where official cooperation is still unable to contribute significantly to the intended participatory development. This approach is in line with the recommendations made in the external evaluation of budgetline B7-6430 (now B7-6002) carried out in 2000. With a view to greater consistency between the decentralised cooperation (B7-6002) and NGO co-financing (B7-6000) budgetlines, it is also proposed to look at the possibility of preparing a single legal basis on the empowering of civil society and the other decentralised local actors concerned in the developing countries for both budget lines concerned. The initial concern is to ensure the continuity of the present budget instrument, while allowing the necessary time for thorough discussion together with all the partners concerned, the preparation and implementation of the procedure for adopting a new regulation and the introduction of a budget instrument adapted to the new strategic guidelines. Regulation 1659/98/EC which establishes the implementing procedures of the measures concerned, is due to expire on 31 December 2001. Its period of validity should now be extended for an additional two years, i.e. up to 31 December 2003. The financial reference amount will have to be adjusted. In the current Regulation, the figure was EUR 18 million. The attached proposal specifies a reference amount of EUR 24 million for the longer period of 1999 to 2003. That amount is justified on the one hand by the commitment rate achieved thus far, i.e. EUR 10.467 million (appropriations made available by the budgetary authority), on the other hand by the amount of EUR 7 million proposed under the 2002 PDB and a similar amount anticipated for 2003. The planned increase for 2002 and 2003 is warranted by the scale of the financing needs observed over the recent years, which have far exceeded the sums provided by the budget authority.