Police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters: framework programme AGIS for 2003-2007

2001/0262(CNS) - 09/11/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present the new framework programme on the basis of Title VI of the Treaty - police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. CONTENT : On 31 December 2002, the five biennial financing programmes covered by Title VI will expire. They are Grotius II - Criminal, Oisin II, Stop II, Hippokrates, and Falcone. Following approval by the Feira European Council in June 2000 of the European Union Action Plan on Drugs (2000-2004) a new budget heading was created for preparatory measures for a programme to combat drug trafficking. This budget heading is also included in the programme. Following encouragement from the Parliament, the Commission has decided to propose the creation of a single framework programme governed by the provisions of Tile VI to replace the existing instruments. This should result in better use of resources, simplify budget procedures, make activities more visible and increase the synergy between the five currently separate programmes. The framework programme is designed to increase cooperation between legal practitioners and between departments involved with law enforcement and crime prevention in the Member States, and between them and other public, civil-society, and business partners, on combating certain forms of crime, and promote assistance to the victims of crime. The proposed instruments are: - training programmes on legislation, operational procedures and good practice, including training of the judiciary. - exchanges and mobility schemes - seminars and conferences - research projects and studies on law and new methods of cooperation between Member States. - projects to disseminate information and build on achievements. The restructuring also involves new terminology and types of project, for example: - an annual work programme, with projects which may last two years - specific projects and complementary measures on subjects in the annual work programme (see below) - more clearly defined criteria for evaluation and selection. Community assistance is limited to a maximum of 70%, except in the case of specific projects and complementary measures, which can be financed up to 100%. Participation by applicant countries is also a major objective in preparation for enlargement. Specific projects could be used for fields in which applicant countries have expressed an interest. An organisation from a Member State will remain formally responsible for introducing a proposal and for implementation of the action. It is proposed that the annual work programme identify specific projects, indicating their type (information campaign, conference, training programme, exchange programme, research, etc) and the required topics and objectives. Complementary measures are envisaged as support for projects already co-financed under the programme. (e.g. development of websites or databases containing information drawn from the programmes activities). The proportion of annual appropriations that can be used for specific projects islimited to 10% of the annual budget. 10% is also set aside for complementary measures. Measures implementing the programme will be adopted in accordance with the management procedure (annual work programme, specific projects and complementary measures) and the advisory procedure (decisions on co-financing).