Voluntary organisations and foundations in Europe

1997/2214(COS) - 26/05/1998

The Committee adopted a report by Fiorella GHILARDOTTI (PES, I)on the role of voluntary organizations and foundations in Europe. The Committee wants to recognize NGOs as full partners in the new structural fund regulations. It suggests that 1 % of the European Social Fund budget should be made available for NGOs in addition to the present structural resources. These funds could be used for micro projects managed by NGOs and local partners. However, the Community must acknowledge NGOs weaknesses in finance, administration and planning and provide them with appropriate information and support measures. According to the Committee, a part of the funds for innovative SMEs in the framework of the employment initiative should be earmarked for voluntary organizations and foundations. In addition, certain labour-intensive services provided by non-profit making organizations should have a reduced VAT rate if they are not subject to trans-border competition. The Committee is willing to give the NGOs a more visible role in European integration. The Commission should revive the idea of a wide-ranging consultation process in connection with the revision of the Treaties. A structured sectoral dialogue should be set in motion between the European institutions and NGOs represented at the European level.