# ALTENER II: multiannual programme for the promotion of renewable energy sources (1998-2002)

1997/0370(COD) - 23/02/1999

The Committee approved, subject to a number of amendments, the Commission proposals for Council decisions concerning two multi-annual programmes (1998-2002) for the promotion of renewable energy sources (Rapporteur: Mr ROBLES PIQUER (PPE,E)) (cooperation procedure, 1st reading; it should be noted that codecision will be applicable to the programme after the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty). The proposal is part of the multi-annual framework programme for actions in the energy sector. The latter (Altener II) has a forerunner in the first Altener programme, which expired on 31 December 1997. For the sake of continuity in Community policy, Altener II had to be adopted for a provisional period of two years by means of a Council Decision of 18 May 1998. It should be noted that with 40% Altener II accounts for most of the funding available for a single programme under the energy framework programme. In connection with the Altener II programme, the Energy Committee would like the Commission to look into the possibility of coordinating policies and initiatives in the sphere of energy saving and energy efficiency in order to develop potential synergies and avoid the duplication of effort. The committee reiterated Parliament·s call of last May for a Charter on Renewable Energies (EURENEW) to be drawn up. Altener II should contribute to achieving the Community objective of replacing, by the year 2010, the equivalent of 15% of the demand for primary energy by renewable energies. One of the objectives of Altener II should be the development of mechanisms to increase the competitiveness of renewable energies and allow faster coordinated market penetration of sustainable energy technologies. The committee further emphasizes the potential of renewable energies to create new jobs and encourage innovation, with due regard to the interests of SMEs. The committee insists finally on the need to promote the export of renewable energy technology through its inclusion in the energy and cooperation areas of external policy and calls for studies to complement the measures taken by the Member States, and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe with an aim to develop the potential of renewable energy.