Education and training : grants to bodies active at European level, 2004-2006 action programme

2003/0114(COD) - 09/01/2004 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission considers that the text of the common position is a good basis for a European Parliament and Council decision. The proposed common position is therefore acceptable to the Commission, subject to revision if necessary of the maximum and minimum percentages set out in the annex and subject to inclusion of the transitional clauses discussed at the budget conciliation meeting of 24 November 2003. The text of the common position is acceptable to the Commission as it largely respects the substance of the Commission's original proposal and takes account of the amendments proposed by the Parliament and accepted in full by the Commission. The Commission considers : - that in relation to the reduction of the programme's duration, it reflects the agreement reached between the three institutions at the trilogue on 13 November. The Commission considers this an acceptable compromise, in the interest of rapid adoption of the legal base; - that the budget modification is acceptable as it was agreed at the budgetary conciliation meeting; - that a requirement is added that the Commission should report annually to the Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of the programme; and reference to a second evaluation report in 2009 is removed, reflecting the reduced duration of the programme. This is acceptable. The Commission accepts these modifications and additions in the common position since they improve and clarify the initial proposal. The Commission highlights that the proposed common position is therefore acceptable to the Commission, subject to revision if necessary of the maximum and minimum percentages set out in the annex and subject to inclusion of the transitional clauses discussed at the budget conciliation meeting of 24 November 2003. It asks for the following clauses to be inserted: - "For grants awarded in 2004, it will be possible for the period of eligibility of expenditure to start on 1 January 2004, provided that the expenditure does not precede the date on which the grant application was lodged or the date on which the beneficiary's budget year starts. During 2004, in the case of beneficiaries whose budgetary year starts before 1 March, an exception may be granted to the obligation to sign the grant agreement within the first four months of the start of the beneficiary's budget year, as referred to in Article 112, paragraph 2 of Council Regulation 1605/2002/EC, Euratom on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities. In this case, the grant agreement should be signed by 30 June 2004 at the latest".