Equality women and men: promoting organisations active at European level, 2004-2005 action programme

2003/0109(COD) - 15/01/2004 - Modified legislative proposal

The Commission accepted 11 amendments in entirety and partially accepted 1 amendment. It rejected 8 amendments. Those amendments accepted in clued the following: - the organisations in receipt of operating grants or grants for actions under strands 2 and 3 must pursue an objective of general European interest which is part of the European Union's policy in the field of gender equality; - the activities of the European Women's Lobby mentioned by the Commission proposal intended to reinforce the gender equality aspect in the EU enlargement process also include developing cooperation with women's organisations in the new Member States; - the addition of examples of the type of action to be financed under the programme, such as gender mainstreaming in education, sport, health and social protection and fostering cooperation with women's organisations in third countries; - the members of the European Women's Lobby include women's organizations. (Its Statutes also refer to women's sections of nongovernmental organisations and natural persons as members). The amendments rejected involve modifying the provisions on co financing, degressivity and, indirectly, the duration of the programme put forward in the Commission's proposal. The Commission does not accept the proposed increase in the cofinancing of the European Women's Lobby to a maximum of 90% rather than the 80% reflecting the current situation, or the application of the degressivity rule for grants to the other organisations with effect from the third year, when the programme only lasts for two years. Parliament also provided for an extension of the programme to 2008 and an increase in the budget to EUR 5.5 million euros. The Commission cannot accept amendments of this kind which are not in line with the trilogue's joint declaration of 24 November 2003. With regard to the reporting requirements, the Commission does not accept the Parliament's amendment, which imposes an obligation disproportionate to the amount and duration of the programme. Furthermore, as the programme finishes at the end of 2005, it would seem appropriate to maintain the obligation to submit a report by the end of 2006. With regard to the amendment enabling operating grants following calls for proposals under strand 2 to be awarded to organisations whose activities include combating violence as an obstacle to equality, the Commission states that this arbitrarily gives priority to a particular activity rather than keeping the provision general. Finally, the amendments providing the Parliament with prior information on the priority themes before issuing the calls for proposals is rejected, since it interferes with the power of execution of which the Commission has a monopoly.