European voluntary service for young people: Community action programme 1998-2002

1996/0318(COD) - 23/12/1996 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE : the establishment of a Community action programme 'European voluntary service for young people', for the period 1 January 1998 to 31 December 2002. SUBSTANCE: - The programme, based on increased cooperation between the Member States, offers young Europeans a recognized educational experience, at transnational level, involving both the acquisition of skills and abilities and the demonstration of responsible citizenship. To meet this objective the Member States and the Commission are to establish structures at European, national, regional or local level to facilitate access to the programme. The Member States are required, in particular, to facilitate the granting of the right of residence in the host Member State for the period of voluntary service and to maintain their entitlements in the Member State of origin, in particular those linked to their social protection. Specifically the programme seeks: . to support long-term or short-term transnational activities of benefit to the community, within Europe or a third country, . to support networks of innovative initiatives, particularly in the social, environmental and cultural fields and with regard to the fight against different forms of exclusion, . to support projects that help these young people to build on the experience acquired and are intended to further the follow-up, . to develop and support the preparation, particularly linguistic and intercultural, and the supervision of young volunteers, in particular mentors and project leaders, . to support the quality of all the programme's activities (in particular the development of the European dimension and improvement of the national support structures for voluntary service, studies and evaluation of the programme). - An annex gives details on the five sections of the voluntary service programme: . section 1 : long-term (six months to one year) or short-term (three weeks to three months) transnational intra-Community projects allowing young people aged between 18 and 25 to participate in social, environmental etc. projects in another Member State; . section 2 : long-term and short-term transnational projects in third countries (basically the same objective as section 1); . section 3 : innovative networks: assistance for the setting up of networks in the social field etc. in the European Union and third countries; . section 4 : support for a sense of initiative and enterprise : assistance for launching complementary training projects, developing initiatives following on from their voluntary service and launching economic activities (including business creation); . section 5 : complementary measures : actions intended to underpin the work of mentors and European project leaders. - Validation : Young volunteers will receive a European certificate attesting to their participation in voluntary service and the skills they have acquired. - Total funding : ECU 60 million for the period 1998-1999 (for the last three years proposals should be drawn up on the basis of the evaluation report on the voluntary service). - Access to the programme : all young people must be able to have access to the programme without discrimination (with special efforts being made for young people who experience the most difficulties in being included in Community or national programmes). - Scope of the programme : the programme is open to the associated countries of central and eastern Europe, Cyprus and Malta and the EFTA countries. - Complementarity : the programme is to be compatible with and complementary to other actions undertaken for young people by the Member States and the Community and with the activities undertaken by the Council of Europe. - Commitology : the Commission is responsible for the management of this programme. It will be assisted by a committee composed of representatives of the Member States. - Monitoring and evaluation : the Commission is to take the necessary measures to ensure the monitoring and continuous evaluation of the programme. Two years after the implementation of the programme it will present to the European Parliament and the Council an evaluation report which will serve to define any new guidelines (including budgetary) for the final three years of the programme.