

Education, training: Community action programme Socrates, 2nd phase 2000-2004

1998/0195(COD) - 27/05/1998 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: to propose the 2nd phase of the Community education programme in the field of education, Socrates, for the period 2000-2004. **SUBSTANCE:** the proposal seeks to establish the second phase of the Socrates programme for the period from 01.01.2000 to 31.12.2004. The total budget proposed for this period is EUR 1.4 billion. By supporting and supplementing the work of the Member States in this field, Socrates II will aim to promote the quality of education by promoting cooperation, increasing mobility and developing the European dimension in all sectors of education. The aim is to help create a 'European education area' where lifelong learning will be promoted and citizenship can be fully exercised. The main innovations of Socrates II include the attention devoted to lifelong learning by bolstering 'adult education' and establishing 'European Knowledge Centres' to bring together implementers and beneficiaries of other Community education, training and youth programmes. The proposal also seeks to define more clearly the players and beneficiaries of the programme. Internally, the programme has been rationalised, limiting the number of actions and decentralising to the maximum the management of the actions undertaken at national level. The structure of the programme: Socrates II has 4 objectives (as against 9 in Socrates I): - to strengthen the European dimension in education; - to promote cooperation in the field of education; - to help remove the obstacles to cooperation; - to encourage innovation. The objectives are to be pursued by means of the eight actions, the first three of which concern the three basic stages of education (school, university and other educational pathways), while the remaining five concern horizontal education policies (languages, multimedia, exchanges of information and other horizontal aspects, such as innovation, dissemination of results and joint actions). Proposed actions: 1) Comenius (school education), comprising school partnerships, or encouragement for the establishment of partnerships between schools in the Member States and professional development projects for schools' teaching staff; 2) Erasmus (higher education), comprising traditional university cooperation and mobility projects; 3) Grundtvig (other educational pathways), to promote education of the young after they have left the school system and of adults who wish to resume their studies after a break from the education system; 4) Lingua: teaching and learning of languages, using innovative methods; 5) Atlas: projects to promote distance education and multimedia communication for educational purposes; 6) Observation and innovation: exchanges of information and experience concerning European education systems, and innovation in these sectors; 7) Joint actions: generation of synergy with other Community programmes, in connection with policy on 'European knowledge centres'; 8) Accompanying measures (miscellaneous initiatives to raise awareness of education, such as the 'Europe in the School' competition and dissemination of the results of the projects carried out). The programme is to be implemented consistently with other Community initiatives or programmes (Leonardo II, Youth, programmes concerned with research, culture, employment, SMEs, etc.) and devote special attention to equality of opportunity for women and men. The Commission is to manage the programme in close cooperation with Member States. Selection procedures have been rationalised (2 calls for proposals rather than 5) and management rendered more decentralised (Member States are required to set up integrated management structures to take charge of the operational implementation of projects). As regards committology, the Commission will be assisted by a committee of representatives of the Member States, whose powers will vary according to the subject in question. The programme will be extended, under financing provisions to be determined, to the Eastern European applicant countries, Cyprus, Malta, Turkey and the EEA countries. Cooperation with third countries and the relevant international organisations (Council of Europe) will also be stepped up. As regards evaluation and monitoring of Socrates II, the Commission will publish a first mid-term review of the programme by 30.06.2003, and a final analysis report by 31.12.2005. Socrates II will be evaluated regularly throughout its implementation, in cooperation with Member States.