MEDA programme, Euro-Mediterranean partnership: economic and social structures

1999/0214(CNS) - 20/10/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to amend the Regulation 1488/96/EC on financial and technical measures relating to the Euro·Mediterranean partnership (MEDA). CONTENT : The existing regulation requires the Commission to submit an evaluation on the implementation of MEDA. An external evaluator did so in 1998, and that report is attached as an appendix to this document. In the light of the evaluation, these proposals have the overall objective of simplifying the implementation of MEDA. A three-pronged strategy is proposed to improve the effectiveness of the MEDA Regulation: - Streamlining the decision-making process in order to achieve more effective programming. This streamlining focuses on MED Committee involvement on strategic planning and programming. The external evaluator questions the appropriateness of the double examination by the Committee of policy implementation. The proposal is expected to reduce the time of project preparation by an average of three months. National and regional financing plans (NFP/RFP) will be adopted annually on the basis of clearly expressed indicative programmes. The Commission will adopt financing decisions within the annual budget on the basis of the NFP or RFP approved by the MED Committee. The later will be informed promptly of the Commission decision. - Enhancing capacities for programming and implementation. The strategies to this end are described but do not require amendments to the MEDA Regulation. - Shortening procedures for more effective implementation, which could help increase the present financial commitment/disbursement ratio. The Commission services are currently developing harmonised procedures. This, too, implies time gains in project preparation. The Mediterranean Directorate in the Commission's Relex DG (External Relations) does not have sufficient human resources. It is advisable to strengthen the Directorate by 25 posts. A breakdown is given in the document.