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

1996/0318(COD) - 11/12/1997 - Commission communication on Council's position

In its opinion on the common position of the Council on European voluntary service, the Commission takes the view that, on the whole, the Council text respects the broad outlines of its original proposal, and incorporates many amendments by the European Parliament, but that from the budgetary point of view it is unacceptable. The Commission cannot endorse the Council's proposal to limit the programme's funding to ECU 35 m for 1998 and 1999, and maintains that a budget of ECU 60 m should be allocated for the period in question, in view of the needs of the programme during its initial phase (preparation, follow-up, adjustment in relation to the needs of young people). To make the programme a success, a critical mass of young people participating in the programme needs to be attained. In the Commission's eyes, the target should be around 12 000 volunteers, which is not compatible with the budget proposed by the Council. The Commission expresses reservations about the way in which the Council's text deals with the mobility of young people (deleting certain references to freedom of movement for them).