TACIS: assistance to the New Independent States of the former USSR and Mongolia (amend. regul. 2053/93/EEC)

1995/0056(CNS) - 25/06/1996 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: enactment of a new TACIS Regulation (TACIS II) for countries of the former USSR and Mongolia for the period from 1 January 1996 to 31 December 1999. COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Regulation (EURATOM/EC) No 1279/96 concerning the provision of assistance to economic reform and recovery in the New Independent States and Mongolia. SUBSTANCE: - the assistance takes the form of a technical assistance programme in favour of economic reforms in progress in the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirghizstan, Moldova, Oubekistan, Russian Federation, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Mongolia. The total amount allocated to TACIS II for the period in question is ECU 2224 m. The areas covered by the TACIS programme are listed in an annex to the regulation, with priority being given to the following: - human resources development, - education and training, - restructuring of public administration, - employment services and social security rights, - strengthening of the civic society, - policy and macro-economic advice, - legal assistance including approximation of legislation, - enterprise restructuring and development, - support for the development of SMUs, - conversion of defence-related industries, - privatization and restructuring, - financial services, - infrastructures, - transport, - telecommunications, - energy, including nuclear safety (priority), - food production, processing and distribution, - environment, - institutional strengthening, - legislation, - training. Assistance is to be concentrated on sectors and geographical areas in which the beneficiary countries have already taken action, and in accordance with criteria that are clearly set out in an annex to the regulation. These criteria relate, in particular, to the type of measures to be implemented with regard to cross-border cooperation and industrial cooperation (particularly equity funding of joint ventures). Provisions are also laid down concerning contract information, supervision, monitoring and evaluation, programming and on-the-spot coordination of Community measures. The Commission is also required to provide annual progress reports on the implementation of the programme. The expenditure covered by TACIS II also includes costs of supplies (particularly in the case of nuclear safety programmes), the cost of the project in local currency if necessary, costs related to monitoring and evaluation, costs related to small-scale infrastructure projects in the context of border crossing facilities and the establishment of joint ventures (through the funding of equity investment), although the amount allocated to the last two kinds of activities must not exceed 10% of the annual TACIS budget. A four-year programme should be established for each of the partner states defining the principal objectives of Community assistance. The assistance should be implemented on a decentralized basis as far as possible. To this end, the final recipients of assistance should be closely involved in the preparation and execution of the projects. Regional and cross-border cooperation is strongly encouraged (with measures involving several countries, along the lines of those already financed under the PHARE programme, being envisaged). The programme is subject to respect for democratic principles and human rights. In the event of failure to comply with one of these requirements, the Council, acting by a qualified majority, may take appropriate measures. The Commission is responsible for implementing operations in accordance with the four-year programme, and shall keep the TACIS committee regularly informed of the projects funded (particularly with regard to supply and works contracts). With regard to the award of contracts, detailed information is provided with regard to the applicable procedures for invitations to tender. A separate annex sets out the principles governing the award of contracts. Service contracts may be awarded by restricted invitations to tender and by private treaty only for operations up to ECU 200 000. The Commission is to be assisted by a committee composed of the representatives of the Member States. The EP shall be kept regularly informed of the implementation of the TACIS programme. An annual report shall be drawn up to that end, addressed to all the Community institutions. - ENTRY INTO FORCE: 7 July 1996.