Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs: job creation, financial assistance. Growth and employment initiative

1998/0024(CNS) - 01/04/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Bartho PRONK (EPP, NL) on financial assistance to SMEs Parliament approved the Commission proposal with the following amendments: - a part of the programme should be devoted to the financing of SMEs in the third system (education, public health, culture), - priority should be given to enterprises with not more than 100 workers, - the mechanisms proposed under the cooperation agreements between the Commission and the EIF should be widely disseminated, in particular to women entrepreneurs, - the Commission should submit an assessment of the programme within 2 years of its adoption and nine months before the expiry of the programme in order to make any adjustments needed and to correct the distribution of financial resources, - the implementation of the different schemes should be assessed annually, - the final assessment of the programme should be conducted by an independent body, taking into account the quality and type of job creation, the sectors concerned and future prospects. Parliament also pointed out in a recital that in its decision on the 1998 budget it created in agreement with the Council a new heading for the labour market for SMEs and technological innovation with financing of ECU 450 million from 1998-2000. It also hoped that the ETF Start-up scheme would be known as the Euro Start-up scheme and that the balances resulting from individual actions could be recycled during the life of the programme then returned to the Community budget at the latest after 15 years.