PHARE. Annual reports 1994 et 1995

1995/2221(COS) - 26/06/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Jan Marinus WIERSMA (PSE, NL) on the PHARE 1994 and 1995 annual reports Parliament noted that in spite of having allocated ECU 6.64 billion in the framework of this programme during the last seven years the Commission had not yet succeeded in introducing an assessment system capable of throwing light on the impact of the assistance given to the countries of central and eastern Europe (CEECs). It believed that PHARE should concentrate more money on those countries which were lagging behind in the economic reform process and which were therefore further away from EU membership and Parliament called on the Commission to improve its assessment of budgetary appropriations allocated to CEECs in the framework of pre-accession strategy. It urged in particular that PHARE should concentrate on initiatives of genuine value for the outcome of the pre-accession strategy. In this respect it noted that the PHARE programme was being transformed from a purely technical assistance programme to an assistance for accession programme. It was essential in this context to launch a new assistance strategy involving a revision of the main guidelines of the programme. In future the programme should deal as a matter of priority with projects that aim to promote: - democracy, respect for human rights, the full integration of different ideological and religious groupings into society, the development of stability in all CEECs (defence of minorities) and their economic and social integration and the development of civil society; - sustainable economic development and infrastructure and the enhancement of commercial relations between the region's countries; - nuclear safety and the combating of pollution, in particular by means of more effective and more environment-friendly technologies; - mutual understanding between the EC and the CEECs via the strengthening and development of cultural and education programmes and exchanges. At the same time, given the lack of well-developed financial systems and capital markets in most of the CEECs it considered that the new Commission strategy should be one that: - assisted the CEECs to implement legislation relating to the supervision of credit institutions and to the stability of the financial system, - encouraged the development of local banking and financial systems capable of facilitating the structural adjustment and privatization of industries, - involved better coordination with the IMF in order to devise macroeconomic policies that did not penalize growth. It considered that with a view to accession the recipient states should increasingly participate in financing for projects implemented, using their own funds. It reaffirmed its support for the EU-CEECs cross-border cooperation programme and PHARE and hoped that in future this programme could be used for cross-border projects. With regard to assessment as such, Parliament called on the Commission to review the content of its annual report with the aim of including: - an assessment of the concrete results, in the light of clearly defined objectives, - the effective impact of assistance on the pace of reforms, - the contribution of assistance to the pre-accession strategy. It asked the Commission to supplement its own evaluations with an independent evaluation system and stressed the need for coordination between the PHARE programme, similar Member State assistance programmes and the measures taken by the international financial institutions. Lastly it stressed the need for the decentralization of the management of the PHARE programme which should go hand in hand with sound monitoring of the disbursement of funding. In this respect Parliament considered that it was necessary to stop delegating to third parties tasks that should be performed by a public service body and to clarify the role of external experts and in-house service providers.