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

1995/0056(CNS) - 16/11/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mr PEX (PPE, NL), Parliament approved the proposal for a regulation with the following amendments: - the programme is to run for a period of 5 years (from 01.01.1996 to 31.12.2000) and is to be reviewed once every 5 years; - the general objectives of the programme are revised: Parliament added that TACIS II should promote the setting up of new structures in the areas of culture, education, health and social protection, as well as for the protection of democracy and the rule of law. It should also seek to improve environmental protection and public health. In each case attention should be paid to the multiplier and spin-off effects of the projects being funded; - the role of NGOs in the provision of assistance is to be encouraged; - the provision of aid to beneficiary countries is subject to the respect of minority rights and to progress in developing a market economy; - as regards controls, the Commission shall ensure that projects are continuously monitored, audited and assessed. An independent evaluation should also be provided for up to a limit of 3% of the annual TACIS budget. These inspections should be carried out on the spot; - as far as aid is concerned, this is to be granted either autonomously by the Community or as a cofinancing arrangement with the Member States, the EIB, third countries, beneficiary nations or multilateral bodies; - as regards implementation, the Commission shall ensure that there is an appropriate level of local representation involved in the preparation of the projects. In this respect, particular attention will be paid to projects which are cofinanced directly by local authorities or by economic operators in the CCEE, - Parliament called for part of the programme to be devoted to crossborder cooperation. Transfrontier projects would be funded jointly through TACIS II and INTERREG; - the procedure for granting financial aid is modified: the projects are accepted by the Commission and the project list is then sent to the TACIS advisory committee. Parliament also modified the procedures for invitations to tender: . for supply and works contracts: tenders are to be submitted within 90 days, . for services contracts (restricted invitations to tender): 40 days. The contracts are also open to CCEE which are eligible for PHARE and to those Mediterranean countries which are signatories to the GATT agreement on public contracts; - Parliament applied a number of strict criteria for assessing invitations to tender. Undertakings which are not to be selected are entitled to ask why they have been rejected; - as regards commitology and the implementation of TACIS, Parliament is to set up an advisory committee, rather than a management committee. The Commission alone will be responsible for coordinating projects (without involving the Member States); - finally, Parliament asked to be kept informed, on a quarterly basis, of the implementation of the programmes in the beneficiary countries, and that a summary report be sent to it on 01.09 of each year.