

EC/developing countries: aid for population policies and programmes in developing countries

1995/0166(SYN) - 22/07/1997 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: to establish cooperation to assist population policies and programmes in developing countries. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Regulation (EC) No 1484/97 on aid for population policies and programmes in the developing countries. **SUBSTANCE:** The measures are to supplement and support the aid provided under other development cooperation instruments (particularly education and health), and concentrate on the following priority objectives: .enabling women, men and adolescents to make a free choice about the number and spacing of their children, .creating a socio-cultural, economic and educational environment conducive to the full exercise of that choice, especially by condemning and eradicating all forms of sexual violence, mutilation and abuse, .helping develop or reform health systems in order to improve reproductive health care for women and men. -Activities eligible: Community aid is granted, as a priority, to the countries which have furthest to go before they meet the criteria formulated by the International Population Conference in Cairo, the poorest and least advanced countries and the most disadvantaged sections of the population. It is granted to projects in the following areas: . support for the establishment, development and increased availability of reproductive health care services as part of programmes implemented by governments, international bodies, NGOs and private operators (with priority for pregnant women and adolescents); .help with policies which contribute to the better reproductive health of women and girls; .the improvement of reproductive health care services, encompassing safe pregnancies, perinatal care, family planning, prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS (infrastructure, equipment, supplies, training, research); .support for information, education and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting better reproductive health and an understanding of population issues; .family-planning policy and services (information on safe and effective family-planning methods); .the development of grassroots structures, the voluntary sector, local NGOs and south-south cooperation for the implementation of programmes and support for cooperation networks between partners. -Cooperation partners: regional and international organizations, local and Member State based NGOs, national, provincial and local government departments and agencies, and community-based organizations (including women's organizations, institutes and public and private operators). -Dialogue: cooperation initiatives are to be implemented on the basis of dialogue with the national, regional and local authorities concerned so as to avoid programmes which are coercive or prejudicial to fundamental human rights. Women in particular will be invited to take part in the design, planning, implementation and evaluation of all projects. -Instruments for cooperation: studies, technical assistance, training or other services, such as supplies and works, and audits and evaluation and monitoring missions. -Expenditure eligible: investment costs (excluding purchase of real estate) and operating costs (mainly during the start-up phase of projects). Cofinancing with Member States and with organizations carrying out projects is keenly sought, depending on the nature of each project and within the limits of the possibilities available to the partners concerned. Contributions from partners are particularly sought in respect of operating costs in order to ensure the viability of projects once Community funding comes to an end. -Form of aid: grants. -Profile of Community-aided projects: measures will be taken to ensure the Community character of projects. -Coherence and complementarity: coordination measures with the Commission are planned, in order to ensure that the measures carried out between all the partners, including Member States, are effective (an information exchange and coordination system is to be established at the place where measures are to be carried out). Coordination will also be ensured with the work of other international organizations active in this field (United Nations Population Fund). -Decision-making procedure: the Commission is to be responsible for appraising and managing operations covered by the Regulation. The selection of projects is to take into account a range of criteria including, in particular, the viability of operations, cultural and social aspects and equality of the sexes, institutional development and experience gained from other operations of the same kind. The Commission will be assisted by the geographically-determined committee depending on the country

concerned (ALA, MED, EDF), acting under the regulatory committee procedure (type III(a)). The Commission is required to provide the committee responsible, in advance, with summaries of all decisions concerning projects costing less than ECU 2 m. Decisions on projects costing more must be taken in agreement with the committee. Participation in invitations to tender and the award of contracts will be open to the recipient countries and the Member States, as well other developing countries or possibly, in exceptional cases, other countries. Particular attention is to be given to the pursuit of cost-effectiveness in the selection of projects and the clear definition of objectives and indications of achievement. - Information: the Commission is to submit an annual report to the European Parliament and the Council summarising and evaluating the operations financed during the year (any contracts concluded, external evaluations, etc.). It is also to inform the Member States, within one month after the decision, of the operations and projects approved. Once each year an exchange of views will take place between the Commission and the various committees concerned on the subject of the general outlines of the operations to be carried out in the year ahead. -Evaluation: the Commission will regularly evaluate the operations implemented to check whether the objectives of the Regulation have been attained. These evaluations are to be forwarded to the various committees and to those Member States which wish to receive them. Three years after the entry into force of the Regulation, a general assessment of the operations financed will be carried out with a view to the possible extension or amendment of the Regulation. - Budget: ECU 35 m from 1998 to 2002. The annual appropriations are to be authorized by the budgetary authority within the limits of the financial perspective. ENTRY INTO FORCE: the Regulation enters into force on 02.08.1997 and is applicable until 31.12.2002.