Developing and consolidating democracy and the rule of law, respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms: requirements for the implementation of development cooperation operations

2003/0250(COD) - 22/04/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a non-binding resolution from Fernando FERNANDEZ MARTIN (EPP-ED, E) on operations for developing and sustaining democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights. Such operations are financed from the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights, under a budget line created by Parliament in 1994. This is the only programme which the agreement of the national authorities in the country where the activity takes place is not required, which makes it highly politically sensitive. The present proposal extends the existing regulation (adopted in 1999) for a further two years and makes a number of changes required by the new Financial Regulation adopted in 2002. New aspects include better information for Parliament on the work of the committee which implements the regulation. Parliament adopted amendments to clarify the list of eligible partners for funding. As well as governmental and non-governmental organisations, individuals will be able to obtain community funding for observing elections or taking part in a trial. Parliament also wants to be informed regularly and in detail of the programmes set up by the Commission and their implementation. More specifically, the Parliament has included the following amendments: - in the case of EU election observation missions and 'amicus curiae' proceedings natural persons are eligible for financing under this Regulation; - the following point is inserted into Article 2 of Regulation 975/1999/EC "supporting efforts to foster the establishment of groupings of democratic countries within United Nations bodies, specialised agencies and regional organisations"; - the Commission shall produce an annual report setting out programming for the coming year by region and by sector, and shall report back on the implementation to the European Parliament; - the Commission shall be responsible for managing and adapting, in conformity with this Regulation and according to the requirements of flexibility, the annual work programmes that were defined in the overall framework of the multiannual setting. The decisions made shall reflect the priorities and main concerns of the European Union for the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, and be determined by the unique nature of the programmes. The Commission shall keep the European Parliament fully informed of the proceedings.