International Fund for Ireland: continuation of the Community financial contributions for 2003-2004

2002/0210(CNS) - 10/12/2002 - Final act

PURPOSE : to adopt a the Council Regulation on the Community financial contributions to the International Fund for Ireland. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Regulation 2236/2002/EC concerning the Community financial contributions to the International Fund for Ireland 2003-2004. CONTENT : subject to the annual budget procedure and in accordance with the Interinstitutional Agreement of 6 May 1999 between the European Parliament, the Council and the commission in budgetary discipline and improvement of the budgetary procedure, an annual contribution of EUR 15 million shall be made to the Fund for each of the years 2003 and 2004 amounting to a total contribution of EUR 30 million. The contribution shall be used by the Fund in accordance with the Agreement under which it was established, priority shall be given to projects of a cross-border or cross Community nature, in such a way as to complement the activities financed by the Community Structural Funds and especially the activities of the PEACE Programme. It shall be used in such a way as to bring about sustainable economic and social improvement in the areas concerned. It shall not be used as a substitute for other public and private expenditure. The Commission shall represent the Community as an observer at the meetings of the Board. The Fund shall be represented as an observer at the Monitoring Committee meetings of the PEACE programme and of other Community Structural Funds interventions, as appropriate. The Commission shall foster coordination at all levels between the Funds's Board and agents, and the managing bodies set up under the Community Structural Funds intervention concerned, in particular under the PEACE programme. The Commission shall in cooperation with the Board determine appropriate publicity and information procedure sin order to publicise the Community's contribution to the projects financed by the Fund. By 31 March 2004 at the latest, the Commission shall submit a report to the budgetary authority, assessing the results of the activities of the Fund and the need for continuing contributions beyond 2004, taking into account developments in the peace process in Northern Ireland. That report shall incorporate, inter alia, the following: - a survey of the Fund's activities; - a list of projects which have received aid; - an assessment of the nature and impact of the Fund's activities, notably in relation to its objectives; - an assessment of action taken by the Fund as regards cooperation and coordination with Community Structural Funds; - an annex setting out the results of the verifications and controls carried out by the Commission. The Commission shall administer the contributions. Subject to an assessment of the Fund's financial needs, the annual contribution shall normally be paid in instalments as follows: - a first advance payment of 40% shall be made after the Commission has received an undertaking, signed by the Chairman of the Board, to the effect that the Fund will comply with the conditions attaching, in accordance with this Regulation, to thegrant of the contribution; - a second advance payment of 40% shall be made six months later; - a final payment of 20% shall be made after the Commission has received and accepted the Fund's annual activity report and audited accounts for the year in question. If the assessment referred to in the second subparagraph leads to the conclusion that, at the material date, the Fund's financial needs do not justify payment of one of those instalments, the payment concerned shall be suspended until such time as the Commission concludes, on the basis of new information provided by the Fund, that it is justified. The contribution shall be subject to the condition that, in the case of an operation which receives or is due to receive financial assistance under a Community Structural Funds intervention, a contribution from the Fund may be allocated to that operation only if the sum arrived at when the figure representing 40% of the amount of the Fund's contribution is added to the figure representing the amount of assistance from the Community Structural Funds does not exceed 75% of the operation's total eligible costs. ENTRY INTO FORCE : 1 January 2003. It shall expire on 31 December 2004.