

Development cooperation: decentralized cooperation

1995/0159(SYN) - 17/07/1998 - Final act

OBJECTIVE: To lay down the administrative procedures for Community decentralised cooperation aiming to support operations and initiatives on sustainable development undertaken by decentralised cooperation agents of the EU and developing countries. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Council Regulation (EC) 1659/98 on decentralised cooperation. **SUBSTANCE:** The regulation covers a three-year period (1999-2001). A reference amount of ECU 18 m is entered in the budget for this programming period. Decentralised cooperation aims to promote: . a participatory approach to development by people in the developing countries, responding to their needs and initiatives, . diversification and reinforcement of civil society and grass roots democracy in these countries, . mobilisation of decentralised cooperation agents in developing countries and the Community in pursuit of these objectives. All developing countries may benefit from this action. Cooperation partners are local authorities, NGOs, local professional or traders' associations, cooperatives, trade unions, women's and youth organisations, teaching and research institutions, churches and associations in developing countries and the Community. Actions to be implemented: development of human and technical resources and local rural or urban social and economic development in the developing countries, information and mobilisation of decentralised cooperation agents, support for strengthening the institutional capacities of such agents and their capacity for action. There are strict criteria for project selection: viability of operations, experience gained from operations of the same kind, etc. Community financing covers investment expenditure (except for the purchase of buildings) and recurring expenditure (including administrative and operating expenditure). Co-financing with local agents and Member States is sought where possible. There are provisions for coordination measures to this end. Financial support takes the form of non-reimbursable grants. With regard to decision-making procedure, the Commission is responsible for deciding on and administering operations. It is assisted by a geographically determined committee competent for development made up of representatives from the Member States. Decision on operations requiring finance of more than ECU 1 m are taken by committee procedure (Type II b committee). Participation in invitations to tender and the award of contracts is open to developing countries and the Member States and to other developing countries or third countries in exceptional cases. The Commission and the Member States will hold an annual exchange of views on future operations. An annual report is to be forwarded to Parliament and the Council summarising the operations financed in the course of that year (including information on contracts concluded). There will also be quarterly reports on operations and projects approved and an evaluation of them. Before the end of 2000 an overall assessment will be submitted to Council and Parliament, accompanied by suggestions concerning the future of the regulation. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 2/08/1998. The regulation is applicable until 31/12/2001.