

Agenda 2000: European Regional Development Fund ERDF

1998/0114(COD) - 12/07/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE: recasting of the ERDF Regulation for the period 2000-2006. **COMMUNITY MEASURE:** Regulation 1261/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). **CONTENT:** The Regulation covers the scope of the ERDF, whereas the overall provisions governing the Structural Funds are dealt with in detail in the General Regulation on the Structural Funds (AVC980090). The new Regulation does not radically alter the previous regulation (Regulation 4254/88/EEC) but nevertheless lays down certain specific provisions : - better defined tasks: the ERDF will intervene with respect to the new Obj. 1 and 2, the Community initiatives in favour of cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation (INTERREG) and the economic and social regeneration of cities and neighbourhoods in crisis (URBAN), as well as innovative actions and technical assistance measures, as laid down in the General Regulation. In order to reduce the gap in the levels of development of various regions and the less favoured regions and islands, including rural regions, the ERDF contributes to the harmonious, balanced and sustainable development of economic activities, to a high degree of competitiveness, a level high level of employment and environmental protection and to fostering equality between men and women. - **Funding:** the ERDF engages in 4 types of funding: a) productive investment to create and safeguard sustainable jobs; b) investments in infrastructures which, in regions covered by Obj. 1, helps to increase the economic potential, development, structural adjustment and creation or maintenance of sustainable jobs in those regions, the diversification of economic sites and industrial areas suffering from decline and the renewal of depressed urban areas, as well as rural areas, and areas dependent on fisheries. These investments may also contribute to the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructures; c) the development of endogenous potential by measures which encourage and support local development and employment initiatives and the activities of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs): services for businesses, technology transfer, improvement of access to finance and loans, direct aid to investment, provision of infrastructure on a scale appropriate to local and employment development and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create new jobs; d) investment in the fields of education and health (only in Obj. 1 areas). The areas in which ERDF measures provide support include development of the productive environment, research and technological development, development of the information society, protection and improvement of the environment, equality between men and women in the field of employment, and transnational, cross-border and inter-regional cooperation. The Regulation also lays down the specific scope of innovative actions. - **Implementation:** implementing rules may be adopted on the basis of the opinion of the Committee on the Development and Conversion of Regions. **ENTRY INTO FORCE:** 29.06.1999.