Cross-border cooperation, economic and social cohesion: European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC)

2004/0168(COD) - 14/07/2004 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to establish a European grouping of cross-border cooperation (EGCC).

PROPOSED ACT : Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council.

CONTENT : this proposal has been drafted as part of the cohesion legislative package. The package consists of a general Regulation (**AVC/2004/0163**), together with a Regulation for the European Social Fund (ESF), Cohesion Fund (**AVC/2004/0166**) and the European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF) (**COD/2004/0167**).

The package is completed by this entirely new proposal creating the framework for a cross-border authority to manage cooperation programmes (EGCC).

Taking into account the important difficulties encountered by the Member States, in particular by the regions and local authorities, in implementing and managing actions of cross-border, trans-national or inter-regional co-operation within the framework of differing national laws and procedures, this proposal aims to set out measures to reduce these difficulties.

In order to overcome the obstacles hindering cross-border co-operation, it is necessary to introduce a co-operation instrument at the community level, which allows the creation of cooperative groupings in the community territory, invested with legal personality, called "European groupings of cross-border co-operation" (EGCC). It should be noted that recourse to the EGCC should be optional.

The EGCC shall have the capacity to act on behalf of its members, notably the regional and local authorities of which it is composed.

The tasks delegated to it must be defined by its members, in a convention of European cross-border co-operation. The EGCC must be able to act, either for implementing programmes of cross-border cooperation co-financed by the Community, notably by the structural funds, as well as transnational

and inter-regional co-operation programmes, or for carrying out cross-border cooperation programmes which are at the sole initiative of the Member States and their regional and local authorities, without financial contribution by the Community.

Lastly, the financial responsibility of regional and local authorities, as well as that of the Member States, is not affected by the formation of an EGCC, with regard to both the management of Community funds and national funds

For further information concerning the financial implications of this measure, please refer to the financial statement.