Structural Funds: extension of the duration of the PEACE programme 2005-2006 and new commitment appropriations

2004/0224(AVC) - 13/10/2004 - Initial legislative proposal

PURPOSE: To extend the PEACE programme for Northern Ireland and the granting of new commitment appropriations

PROPOSED ACT: Council Regulation

CONTENT: The PEACE programme has been operating since 1995 within the framework of the Structural Funds. Its strategic aim is "to reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promoting reconciliation" in Northern Ireland. Its creation followed the announcement of ceasefires by the main paramilitary organisations in the region. For the period 2000-2004 the total expenditure of the Programme has been estimated at EUR 708 million, of which EUR 531 million comes from four strands of the Structural Funds.

Both the Irish and the UK Prime Ministers have written to the Commission to examine ways in which the PEACE programme can be extended for a further two years – i.e. 2005-2006. This proposal prepares the way to extend the PEACE programme by a further two years coinciding with the programming period for the Structural Funds.