

Community aid: conditions for access to the instruments financing the Community external assistance

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The committee adopted the report by Michael GAHLER (EPP-ED , DE) amending the proposal under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure:

- MEPs introduced a new Article 9a with the aim of developing local markets through local and regional procurement in partner countries. Moreover, participation in an invitation to tender should be linked to the bidder's formal adherence to a set of internationally agreed core labour standards, including the conventions on freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of forced and compulsory labour, elimination of discrimination with respect to employment and occupation, and abolition of child labour. The new article also specified that "access by developing countries to Community external assistance shall be enabled by all technical assistance deemed appropriate";

- the list of "eligible" candidates should be limited to developing countries and access should be denied to countries in transition, in order to avoid 'social dumping';

- the Rapid Reaction Mechanism should be excluded from the scope of the proposed regulation, as it is not an instrument with a specific development objective;

- Parliament should be kept duly informed of the comitology procedures applied for granting access to third countries to Community external assistance.