Financial instrument for civil protection

2005/0052(CNS) - 06/04/2005 - Document attached to the procedure

COMMISSION'S IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For further information regarding the context of this issue, please refer to the summary of the Commission's initial proposal (COM(2005)0113) for a Regulation Establishing a Rapid Response and Preparedness Instrument for Major Emergencies.

1- POLICY OPTIONS AND IMPACTS

Three options have been considered for achieving the overall objective.

1.1- Option 1 - No policy change: if no action is taken at EU level, no Community financing will be available for civil protection from 2007 onwards. The Commission will not be able to continue to operate the existing instruments in the field of civil protection and the above goals cannot be achieved.

1.2- Option 2 - Promote cooperation between Member States with no financial incentive: in this case, the EU would not be capable of expressing its solidarity with those affected by major disasters. It would not be able to ensure timely transportation of vital assistance, better preparedness or the availability of assistance and equipment necessary to alleviate the immediate consequences of disasters. This would have negative consequences for the image of the Union and our citizens' perception of European solidarity. Moreover, Member States are likely to revert to purely national interventions, carried out in a bilateral framework with the country affected by a disaster. This would mean that the progress made to date risks being lost. The Union will not be capable of ensuring coherence and effectiveness of the overall assistance and will not be able to live up to its commitment to ensure solidarity with countries affected by major disasters.

1.3- Option 3 - Legislative instrument ensuring funding for civil protection: a legislative instrument is needed to strengthen cooperation and to enhance preparedness. Moreover, from the above it is evident that financial support is necessary at EU level to achieve both the general and specific objectives in this area.

CONCLUSION: it is necessary to establish a Rapid Response and Preparedness Instrument under which financial assistance may be given, as a contribution to improving the effectiveness of systems for preparing for and responding to major emergencies, in particular in the context of the Community Civil Protection Mechanism.

IMPACTS

The specific action proposed will allow the Commission and the Member States to pursue an integrated approach that will provide the optimal level of support to Member States affected by major disasters. It will allow the Commission to address the main weaknesses of existing work on civil protection and ensure that effective assistance is provided immediately to those affected by major disasters. The proposal will allow recent events, new technologies and the lessons learned from disasters to be taken into account and reflected in the future work of the Mechanism. They contribute to the Commission's overall policy of enhancing security of EU citizens and showing solidarity with those affected by disasters.

- Response to disasters

The specific objectives of civil protection actions in this area are to mobilise expertise, to facilitate transportation and associated logistical support and to mobilise equipment and means. The actions will result in

• The sending of experts in case of disasters to assist the affected country in the assessment of the needs on site and to liaise with the competent authorities of the affected country (estimated number of 10 disasters per year and 10 experts per disaster);

• Transportation of European civil protection assistance in the event of disasters as well as associated logistical support (estimated number of 10 disasters per year and 6 flights per disaster);

• The mobilisation of equipment and means (estimated number of 10 disasters).

Relevant indicators are the delivery of European assistance in case of disasters, its positive impact on the immediate consequences, its timeliness and effectiveness.

- Preparedness

Preparedness actions encompass all activities and measures taken in advance, within the EU and the participating countries, to ensure effective rapid response and to mitigate the adverse consequences of disasters.

They will ensure the following concrete results (per year):

• training courses (including general training courses in the context of the Mechanism as well as training courses focusing on specific issues or for a specialised audience) to provide experts and team leaders with the knowledge and tools needed to participate effectively in Community interventions and to develop a common European intervention culture;

• command post exercises and full-scale exercises to test interoperability, train civil protection

officials and create a common intervention culture;

• the exchange of experts to enhance understanding of European civil protection and to share information and experience;

• workshops to enhance information sharing and promote a common understanding of civil protection issues;

• projects, studies, surveys, modelling, scenario-building and contingency planning, capacity building assistance; demonstration projects; technology transfer; awareness and dissemination actions; communication actions; provision of adequate means and equipment and monitoring assessment and evaluation.

2- FOLLOW-UP

The proposal will be implemented by the Commission. A comprehensive monitoring system is provided by Article 11 of the proposal. This includes: on-the-spot checks, including sample checks, on actions financed under this Regulation; supervision and financial control of grants and contracts by the Commission and audits by the Court of Auditors, including on-the-spot, in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation; obligations on the beneficiary of financial assistance to keep available for the Commission all the supporting documents regarding expenditure on the action; etc.

In addition, the Commission shall submit to the EP and the Council:

a) an interim evaluation report no later than 31 December 2010;

b) a communication on the continuation of this Regulation no later than 31 December 2011;

c) an ex-post evaluation no later than 31 March 2015.