Financial instrument for civil protection

2005/0052(CNS) - 24/01/2006

The committee adopted the report by Dimitrios PAPADIMOULIS (EUL/NGL, EL) amending the proposal in three main areas - the legal basis, the scope and the budget:

- legal basis: MEPs argued that the main purpose of the regulation was the protection of human health and the environment, and that the legal basis should therefore be **Article 175** of the EC Treaty, involving the codecision procedure, rather than **Article 308** as proposed by the Commission (involving the consultation procedure);

- scope: whereas the original proposal did not address prevention, the committee felt that preventive measures were essential in this field and amended the title and objectives accordingly. It also extended the scope of the proposal in other ways, so as to include a rapid response to emergencies, not only inside but also outside the Community, which have or may have "adverse impact on people, public health and safety, property, cultural heritage or the environment caused by natural, industrial or technological disasters, including marine pollution, or acts of terrorism". Special attention should also be given to isolated and outermost regions which are not easily accessible;

- budget: as a result of the amendments extending the scope to include prevention and financing of actions outside the Community, the committee called for the budget initially proposed by the Commission (EUR 173 million for the period 2007-2013) to be increased by EUR 105 million, bringing it up to EUR 278 m.

Other amendments introduced new actions which would be eligible for funding, including: special training for emergency operations personnel to enable them to deal better with the particular needs of the disabled; the transfer not only of technology but also of knowledge and expertise and the sharing of experience and best practices; networking of alert, early warning and response systems; the integration of civil protection measures into teaching programmes and awareness campaigns; and special training for volunteers, under the control and supervision of a local statutory authority. Lastly, MEPs said that, when actions are implemented outside the EU borders, they should be coordinated with the United Nations. And they introduced a new article providing as a general rule for closer links and "enhanced, structured and continued cooperation" with international organisations.