

Life long learning: integrated action programme comprising Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig programmes and the Jean Monnet programme

2004/0153(COD) - 25/10/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Doris **PACK** (EPP-ED, DE) by 549 votes in favour to 47 against with 23 abstentions and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal. Parliament increased the programme's multiannual budget from EUR 13.62 million to EUR 14 377 million. It also made adjustments to the budget share to be allocated to the sectoral programmes: for Comenius this was increased from 10%, as originally proposed, to 12%; for Erasmus it was increased slightly from 40% to 41%; while for Leonardo Da Vinci it was reduced from 25% to 23%. The proposed 3% share for Grundtvig was left unchanged.

In addition:

-Parliament increased the participation of pupils and teachers in the Comenius sub-programme, which is designed for schools, from 1 in 20 pupils to 1 to 15. Parliament also suggests a new sub-programme called Comenius-Regio to promote cross-border individual mobility of pupils and teachers, especially between adjacent regions. It should involve some 10 000 pupils and 10 000 teachers.

-There is an increase in the monthly standard grant from EUR 210 in 2007 to EUR 300 in 2013, as compared to the Commission's figures of EUR 200 and EUR 250, respectively.

-Several amendments focused on the specific objectives of the programme: the need to promote the convergence of Member States' education systems towards higher quality standards; encouraging interaction between education and business; the need to contribute to intercultural dialogue; emphasis on linguistic diversity, respect for human rights and democracy in the implementation of the programme; improving access to the programme for less-favoured persons and groups.

-A new clause states that the Commission will provide the national agencies with criteria which they shall follow with regard to selection and award procedures, as well as contract, payment and audit arrangements, for the funds they manage. These criteria must take into account the size of the grants made; where grants amount to less than EUR 25 000 they will provide for simplified systems at all stages involving applicants or beneficiaries. They will enable national agencies to determine and limit the detail required from applicants for grants and to issue contracts following the award of grants on a simplified basis including only the following elements: the contracting parties; the duration of the contract, which shall be the period of eligibility of the expenditure; the maximum amount of funding awarded; a summary description of the action involved; reporting and audit access requirements.

-Flat rate grants may be used up to a maximum of EUR 25 000 per grant. They may be combined up to a maximum of EUR 100 000 or used in conjunction with scales of unit costs.

-All schools and higher education institutions specified by Member States, and all learning providers who have received more than 50% of their annual revenues from public sources over the previous two years, or who are controlled by public bodies or their representatives, shall be treated by the Commission as having the necessary financial, professional and administrative capacity, together with the necessary financial

stability, to carry out projects under this programme; they shall not be required to produce further documentation to demonstrate this.

-Finally, a new clause states that, In accordance with the principle of proportionality, certification and reporting requirements will be kept to the appropriate minimum necessary level.