Instrument for Stability 2007-2013

2004/0223(COD) - 25/04/2006

The committee adopted the report by Angelika BEER (Greens /EFA, DE) amending - under the 1st reading of the codecision procedure - the proposed regulation establishing an Instrument for Stability. A number of the amendments were the result of agreements reached between the rapporteur and representatives of the Council during preliminary contacts. Both sides agreed that the legal basis should not be Article 308 TEC, as originally proposed, but Articles 179 (Development Cooperation) and 181a (Economic, financial and technical cooperation with third countries). This modification would require changes to the scope of the proposal, e.g. all references to measures involving nuclear safety should be deleted as they would be covered by a separate proposal.

The committee also made amendments to Article 1 (objectives of the instrument) to reflect the changes to the legal basis, emphasising that Community assistance should contribute to peace, stability, the development of democracy and the rule of law and the upholding of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

MEPs made further radical changes restructuring the text of the proposal:

- general provisions regarding subsidiarity, complementarity and coordination with other instruments and with Member States' actions should be grouped under a single article, together with new horizontal provisions on the gender perspective as well as publicity for and visibility of Community action;

- all short-term crisis-related measures should be grouped together in one article. The committee also added a reference to the Democracy and Human Rights Instrument in order to emphasise that it should be maintained as a separate programme operating in parallel with the Stability Instrument;

- more long-term, stability-related actions should be grouped together in one article.

In other amendments, the committee called for Parliament as well as the Council to be kept informed about the planning of exceptional measures and interim programmes. It proposed a new Article requiring the Commission to submit a proposal for a Multi-annual Policy Framework (MPF) setting out the policy guidelines and strategic priorities underlying Community assistance, to be adopted under the codecision procedure. It also introduced a number of call-back mechanisms for certain measures to be proposed under the commitology procedure (thematic programmes, strategy papers, guidelines, etc.), enabling Parliament and Council to ask the Commission to withdraw such measures and submit a legislative proposal. Lastly, the committee introduced a new article proposing an indicative financial reference amount of EUR 4 455 million for the seven-year period beginning on 1 January 2007.