Agreement EC/Bulgaria: participation in the work of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction

2006/0095(CNS) - 01/06/2006 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to conclude an Agreement between the Community and Bulgaria on the participation of Bulgaria in the work of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). PROPOSED ACT: Council Decision.

CONTENT: based on a Council mandate, the European Commission has concluded negotiations for the participation of Bulgaria, a candidate country, of the EU's European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA). Negotiations on an Agreement have been concluded and Bulgaria is now in the process of ratifying the draft Agreement. Similar negotiations and Agreements have been concluded, simultaneously, with two other candidate countries: Turkey (**CNS/2006/0089**) and Romania (**CNS/2006 /0087**).

The conditions set out in the draft Agreement are comparable to those applied to Norway's participation on the EMCDDA. The Agreement states that Bulgaria will be allowed to take part in the Centre's work programme and must meet all of the obligations set out in Council Regulation 302/93/EEC, establishing the Centre, and its subsequent amendments (Council Regulation 3294/94/EC, Council Regulation 2220 /2000/EC and Council Regulation 1651/2003/EC). Bulgaria will be linked to the "European Information Network on Drugs and Drug Addition" (REITOX) and will share data with the Centre. As far as the financial provisions are concerned, Bulgaria will be fully integrated in all of the Centre's activities after a 3-year phase-in period. The financial contribution is therefore expected to increase every year until the end of this period. Bulgaria may apply to Community assistance programmes to subsidise part of its financial contribution. The Agreement has been drafted to allow Bulgaria to take part in the Management Board – but without voting rights.

Participation is on unlimited for an unlimited period and will last until such time as Bulgaria becomes a member of the European Union. For its part, the EMCDDA will treat this country as an existing Member based on equal terms, such as linking up to REITOX and staffing provisions. Participation:

A number of benefits are foreseen with the participation of Bulgaria on the Agreement. The Centre:

- will help apply the Community's body of law relating to drugs, prior to accession;

- will allow Bulgaria to become more familiar with the decision-making procedure of the EMCDDA;

- will extend its reporting on the state of drug use and addiction to Bulgaria;

- will allow data thus collected be used and disseminated through the Centre's Annual Report;

- will allow Bulgaria to benefit from the "Early Warning System on New Synthetic Drugs" – an instrument developed by the EMCDDA.

For further information concerning the financial implications of this measure, please refer to the financial statement.