European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument 2007-2013

2004/0219(COD) - 06/07/2006 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Konrad **SZYMASKI** (UEN, PL) and made several amendments to the Commission's proposal. The main ones are as follows:

1) The use of the management procedure is applicable when defining the implementing rules which will govern the implementation of crossborder cooperation and when adopting strategy papers, action programmes and special measures not provided for in strategy papers whose value exceeds the threshold of EUR 10 million.

2) Parliament amended certain areas of cooperation and inserted new areas of cooperation where Community assistance will be used to support measures:

- promoting the rule of law and good governance, including strengthening the effectiveness of public administration and the impartiality and effectiveness of the judiciary, and supporting the fight against corruption and fraud;

- pursuing regional and local development efforts, in both rural and urban areas, in order to reduce imbalances and improve regional and local development capacity;

- health policies must include not only measures to combat the major communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases and disorders but also access to services and education for good health, including reproductive and infant health for girls and women ;

- supporting cooperation aimed at protecting historical and cultural heritage and promoting its development potential, including through tourism;

- promoting regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration, including where appropriate with countries not eligible for assistance under this Regulation ;

3) Where no agreements between the EU and partner countries exist, assistance may be provided when it proves useful to pursue EU policy objectives, and shall be programmed on the basis of such objectives.

4) Co-financing requirements may be waived in duly justified cases and when this is necessary to support the development of civil society and non-state actors for measures aimed at promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms and supporting democratisation.

5) Community assistance under the Regulation shall be implemented through :

- country, multi-country and crossborder strategy papers and multi-annual indicative programmes and

- joint operational programmes for crossborder cooperation, annual action programmes and special measures.

6) The Commission shall determine the allocation of funds to the cross-border cooperation programmes, taking into account objective criteria, such as the population of the eligible areas and other factors affecting the intensity of cooperation, including the specific characteristics of the border areas and the capacity for managing and absorbing assistance.

7) Joint operational programmes shall be established by the Member States and partner countries concerned at the appropriate territorial level, in accordance with their institutional system and taking into account the principle of partnership. They shall normally cover a period of 7 years running from 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2013.

8) Parliament clarified the conditions where a joint operational programme cannot be established owing to problems arising in relations between participating countries or between the EU and a partner country.

9) The management and control system of a joint operational programme shall provide for proper separation of the management, certification and audit functions

10) In order to allow the joint operational programmes to adequately prepare for implementation, following the adoption of the joint operational programme and before the signature of the financing agreement, the Commission may allow the joint managing authority to use part of the programme budget to start financing programme activities such as the incurring of operational costs of the managing authority, technical assistance and other preparatory actions.

11) Parliament broadened the categories of persons eligible for participation in the award of procurement or grant contracts financed under the Regulation.

12) The financial envelope for implementation of this Regulation over the period 2007-2013 is EUR 11 181 million broken down as follows:

- a minimum of 95 percent of the financial envelope will be allocated to the country and multi-country;

- up to 5 percent of the financial envelope will be allocated to the crossborder cooperation programmes.

13) The Commission shall submit by 31 December 2010 (rather than 2011) a report evaluating the implementation of the Regulation in the first three years with, if appropriate, a legislative proposal introducing the necessary modifications to the Instrument, including to the financial breakdown.