

Youth policy: Youth in action programme for 2007-2013

2004/0152(COD) - 24/07/2006 - Council position

The Council's common position remains substantially in line with the Commission's original proposal, not least in respect of the Programme's objectives and actions, which it was possible to maintain in full following the Interinstitutional Agreement on the Financial Framework for 2007-2013.

The total amount allocated to the Programme stands at EUR 785 million at 2004 prices (i.e. **EUR 885 million** at current prices), which represents only a slight fall in relation to the Commission's original proposal.

New elements contained in the common position as compared to the Commission proposal

The most significant amendment to the original proposal was probably the inclusion of minimum financial thresholds for each of the actions under the Programme (see Annex - Management of the Programme). Although this conflicts slightly with the Commission's call for maximum flexibility, the compromise agreement reached between the Parliament and the Council on the breakdown between the five actions still allows for a flexibility margin of 22% to be allocated in accordance with future priorities and requirements. Apart from a number of structural and textual improvements, the other main changes to the original proposal involved a decision to focus primarily on the 15-28 age group, a requirement on appropriate insurance cover for participants and greater emphasis on the provision of non-formal learning opportunities.

European Parliament amendments

The Council has sought in its common position to take account of the European Parliament's concerns and priorities and has been able to accept a large number of Parliament's amendments. However, just over a quarter of the total number of EP amendments have been rejected.

Those which request an increase of 23% in the overall budget for the Programme - were rejected in the light of the Interinstitutional Agreement on the 2007- 2013 Financial Framework. A number of amendments (on disabilities, youth seminars and proportionality) were rejected on the grounds that their content was covered elsewhere in the text. Others were felt to be either too restrictive (on 'qualified' operatives, on the need for 'sufficiently skilled' staff and on funding procedures) or too detailed (on the European Youth Week and on a database for financial documentation). Nor could the Council accept the amendment on language learning, arguing that this was amply covered by other Community programmes.

Lastly, the Council - in support of the Commission's original proposal - rejected two deletions by the Parliament: one which had deleted a reference to the need for national agencies to offer 'sufficient financial guarantees' and the other which had removed the possibility for certain types of project to call for volunteers with specific skills.