European year of intercultural dialogue 2008: respect and promote cultural diversity in Europe and develop an active European citizenship

2005/0203(COD) - 05/09/2006 - Modified legislative proposal

Of the 46 amendments adopted by Parliament at first reading, the European Commission can accept 31 of them. The Commission considers that the vast majority of the amendments accepted improve the drafting of the Decision. The following amendments, which the Commission accepts either in their entirety or in substance, make substantial changes to the draft Decision. They refer to those:

- underlining the cultural and educational dimensions of the renewed Lisbon Strategy. The need to provide information on equal opportunities and the need for an active non-discrimination policy in the Community;

- emphasising the need for structured co-operation with civil society;

- referring to gender equality;

- explicitly mentioning the Council of Europe and UNESCO;

- clarifying the concept of intercultural dialogue in the context of the Year;

- introducing a reference to religious diversity;

- stressing the importance of education in promoting intercultural dialogue;

- stressing the meaning of intercultural dialogue in everyday life;

- emphasising the regional and local level administrations;

- underlining the need to consult transnational networks and civil society in the context of the evaluation of the Year;

- underlining the link between the Year of intercultural dialogue with the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All (2007); and lastly

- introducing a provision on “participation in the action” which stresses the role of civil society, the media and local authorities.

The budgetary make-up of the proposal has also been modified. The original budget of EUR 10 million remains unchanged. Changes have been made, however, to the budgetary allocation of the financial resources. To recall, the initial proposal proposed that EUR 4.5 million be spent on the information and communication campaigns; EUR 2.4 million be spent on actions at a Community level; EUR 2,5 million be spent on actions at a national level and EUR 0 6 million on studies.

The European Parliament proposed a drastic cut in expenditure on communication and information campaigns to 20% of the overall budget – in other words a reduction from EUR 4.5 million to EUR 2 million.

The Council took another view and proposed EUR 4 million for communication and studies and EUR 3 million for actions at a Community and EUR 3 million for national levels.

A consultation of the modifications took place during a tripartite meeting in July 2006. As far as the budget is concerned the Commission supports the breakdown suggested by the Cultural Affairs Committee of the Council. It does so on the grounds that it constitutes a good compromise between the initial proposal and the wishes of Parliament.

For a more detailed breakdown of the revised figures, please refer to the Financial file below.