

Programme Marco Polo II (2007-2013), financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of freight transport

2004/0157(COD) - 24/10/2006 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish the second 'Marco Polo' programme for the granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system (Marco Polo II) and repealing Regulation 1382/2003/EC.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Regulation 1692/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the second 'Marco Polo' programme and repealing Regulation 1382/2003/EC.

CONTENT: the Council adopted a Regulation establishing the second Marco Polo programme for the granting of Community financial assistance to improve the environmental performance of the freight transport system.

The Marco Polo II programme covers the period 2007-2013 and amounts to an expanded version of the first programme. As compared to the first programme, its geographical coverage is broader and it proposes two new types of action: motorways of the sea and traffic avoidance actions.

The programme is aimed at enhancing intermodality, reducing road congestion and improving the environmental performance of the freight transport system within the EU.

To achieve this objective, the programme will support actions in the freight transport, logistics and other relevant markets, taking into account the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises. It will help to shift at least the expected aggregate increase in international road freight traffic, measured in tonne-kilometres, to short sea shipping, rail and inland waterway transport or to a combination of modes of transport in which road journeys are as short as possible.

The five types of actions eligible for financing under the Marco Polo II programme are the following: catalyst actions, motorways of the sea actions, modal shift actions, traffic avoidance actions and common learning actions.

As regards state aid, Community financial assistance for the actions covered by the Programme shall not prevent those actions from being granted State aid at national, regional or local level, insofar as such aid is compatible with the State-aid arrangements laid down in the Treaty and within the cumulative limits established for each type of action. The total aid granted in the form of State aid and Community financial assistance in respect of ancillary infrastructure shall not exceed 50 % of eligible costs.

The general level of contract value and traffic shift thresholds are set at EUR 2 million per catalyst action, at EUR 2,5 million for motorways of the sea action, at EUR 0,5 million for modal shift action, at EUR 1 million for traffic avoidance actions and EUR 250 000 for common learning actions.

The financial envelope allocated to the programme is set at EUR 400 million (at 2004 prices).

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 14.12.2006.