



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 30.03.1998
COM(1998) 201 final

96/0318 (COD)

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION

pursuant to Article 189 b (2) (d) of the EC Treaty,
on the European Parliament's amendments
to the Council's common position regarding the

proposal for a

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION

**establishing the Community action programme
"European voluntary service for young people"**

AMENDING THE PROPOSAL OF THE COMMISSION

pursuant to Article 189 a (2) of the EC Treaty

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

Article 189b (2d) of the EC Treaty states that the Commission shall deliver an opinion on amendments proposed by the European Parliament at second reading.

The Commission hereby sets out its opinion on the 10 amendments proposed by the European Parliament. It also attaches, pursuant to Article 189a (2) of the EC Treaty, an amended proposal incorporating the two EP amendments which it has accepted.

1. Background

- a) On 23 December 1996, the Commission forwarded to the Council and the European Parliament its proposal for a Decision (COM(96) 610 final - COD 96/0318).
- b) On 19 March 1997, the Economic and Social Committee delivered a favourable opinion.
- c) On 12 June 1997, the Committee of the Regions delivered a favourable opinion.
- d) On 12 June 1997, the European Parliament adopted, at first reading, a favourable resolution containing 40 amendments to the Commission proposal.
- e) On 23 July 1997, the Commission adopted, in accordance with Article 189a (2) of the EC Treaty, an amended proposal for a Decision containing in full or in part 18 of the 40 amendments put forward by the European Parliament (COM(97) 347 final - COD-96/0318).
- f) On 16 December 1997, the Council adopted its common position.
- g) On 12 March 1998, the European Parliament voted at second reading to adopt a favourable resolution including 10 amendments to the common position.

2. Aim of the proposal for a Decision

Based on Article 126 of the Treaty, the programme forms part of the framework of objectives for a policy of cooperation in the field of youth.

Its main objective is to help with the integration of young people into active life by means of socially useful transnational activities within the Community and in non-member countries. European voluntary service (EVS) offers young people residing in the European Community (aged 18-25) a recognised formative experience, at transnational level, involving both the acquisition of skills and abilities and the demonstration of responsible citizenship.

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE AMENDMENTS BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

After examining the amendments proposed by the European Parliament at second reading, the Commission is able to support those which:

- are in line with its initial proposal, or
- provide useful clarification of the text.

1. Amendments accepted by the Commission

The Commission is able to accept amendments Nos 1 and 6, and has incorporated them into its new amended proposal so that they may be re-examined by the Council.

Amendment No 1 (13th recital) concerns the removal of obstacles to the mobility of young volunteers. The Commission is able to accept the principles behind this amendment using the following wording: "Whereas appropriate measures, particularly with regard to social protection and tax systems adopted by the Member States, would help facilitate access by young people to national infrastructures within the framework of voluntary service". The aim is to take account of the competence of the Member States in this matter.

Amendment No 6 (Article 9,(1)) concerns the composition of the Committee. The Commission, in keeping with the Comitology text, is able to accept the amendment by means of the following alterations to the wording: replacement of "In the execution of this task" by "In the implementation of this programme" for the purposes of coherence of the text; replacement of "composed of one representative of each Member State" by "composed of representatives of the Member States".

2. Amendments rejected by the Commission

Amendments Nos 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are rejected by the Commission.

Amendment No 2 (recital 21) concerns compatibility between European voluntary service and existing national civilian services. The Commission recognises the importance of this aspect in the development of EVS, but cannot accept the amendment from the European Parliament, which touches upon questions related to the competence of the Member States.

Amendment No 3 (Article 3 (1)) concerns the budget for the two years of the programme. The Commission maintains the budget put forward in its initial proposal (ECU 60 million).

Amendment No 4 (Article 7 (1)): the first part of the amendment relates to informing and raising the awareness of volunteers with regard to their rights and obligations. This concern is covered by the text of the common position. The second part relates to compatibility with existing national civilian services: see amendment No 2. The text of the common position takes on board, in spirit, the European Parliament's amendments on this question.

Amendment No 5 (Article 7 (2)) relates to the removal of obstacles to the mobility of young volunteers. The amended text of recital No 13 (see amendment No 1) is more appropriate than the first part of the European Parliament's amendment in so far as the Commission insists on respecting the competence of the Member States in this matter.

The second part asks the Commission to put forward proposals aimed at introducing a status for young volunteers and thereby calls into question the Commission's right of initiative.

Amendments Nos 7, 8, 9, 10 (Article 9 (2, 3, 3a)) relate to the Programme Committee and introduce elements of the *Modus Vivendi*. While respecting commitments made in the context of the *Modus Vivendi*, the Commission must keep exactly to the Comitology text.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the Commission considers that the European Parliament's proposed amendments Nos 1 and 6 to the common position reinforce the text with regard to the removal of remaining obstacles and with regard to Comitology.

The amended proposal incorporates these amendments.

Amended proposal for a

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION

establishing the Community Action Programme

“European voluntary service for young people”

**(presented by the Commission in accordance with
Article 189a (2) of the EC Treaty**

Common position	Amended proposal following the EP position of 20/10/2000
<p>(11) Whereas it is necessary to create new opportunities for the transfer and application of experience and good practice and to promote new partnerships;</p> <p>(12) Whereas an independent ex-ante evaluation of a multi-annual programme of voluntary service has been carried out in accordance with the principles put in place by the Commission for the second phase of its SEM 2000 ("sound and efficient management") programme;</p> <p>(13) Whereas this Decision establishes a Community framework designed to contribute to the development of transnational voluntary service activities;</p> <p>(14) Whereas participation by young people in voluntary service activities constitutes a form of informal education, the quality of which will to a large extent be based on appropriate preparation activities including those of a linguistic and cultural nature, contributes to their future development and to broadening their horizons, promotes the development of their social skills, active citizenship and their balanced integration into society from an economic, social and cultural point of view and makes it possible to promote awareness of genuine European citizenship;</p>	<p><u>(13) Whereas appropriate measures, particularly with regard to social protection and tax systems adopted by the Member States, would help facilitate access by young people to national infrastructures within the framework of voluntary service;</u></p>

Common position	Amended proposal following the 14 th session of 12 March 1988
<p>2. Each Member State shall endeavour, as far as possible, to adopt such measures as it deems necessary and desirable to ensure the proper functioning of the programme, in particular as far as the mobility of young volunteers is concerned.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Article 8</u> Attestation</p> <p>A document, drawn up by the Commission in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 9(2) and (3), shall attest to the participation of young volunteers in European Voluntary Service and to the experience and skills that they have acquired during the relevant period.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Article 9</u> Committee</p> <p>1. In the implementation of this programme, the Commission shall be assisted by a committee composed of two representatives of each Member State and chaired by the representative of the Commission.</p> <p>2. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee a draft of the measures to be taken in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the committee's rules of procedure; - the implementing provisions; - the annual plan of work for the implementation of the measures in the programme; - the general balance between the various sections of the programme; 	<p><u>1. In the implementation of this programme, the Commission shall be assisted by a committee composed of representatives of the Member States and chaired by the representative of the Commission.</u></p>

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