
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1982-1983

4 May 1982

DOCUMENT 1-181/82

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Regional
Policy and Regional Planning

on the proposal from the Commission of the
European Communities to the Council (Doc. 1-851/81
- COM(81) 707 final) for a regulation instituting
a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern
Ireland within the framework of an integrated
operation in Belfast

Rapporteur: Mrs Y. FUILLET

PE 77.118/fin.

By letter of 7 December 1981 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation instituting a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland within the framework of an integrated operation in Belfast.

On 14 December 1981 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for an opinion.

At its meeting of 23 February 1982 the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning appointed Mrs FUILLET rapporteur. It considered the proposal on 27 April 1982 and unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution.

The following took part in the vote: Mrs FUILLET, vice-chairman and rapporteur, Mr CARDIA, Mrs BOOT, Mr CRONIN, Mr GENDEBIEN, Mr HARRIS, Mr KAZAZIS, Mrs KELLETT-BOWMAN, Mr KYRKOS, Mr Konstantinos NIKALAOU, Mr PÖTTERING, Mr MARKOPOULOS, Mr Karl SCHÖN, Mr John David TAYLOR, Mr TREACY and Mr von der VRING.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets will be published separately.

CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS	5
MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION.....	10
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	12

The Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning hereby submits to the European Parliament the following amendments and motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

Proposal for a regulation instituting a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland within the framework of an integrated operation in Belfast (COM(81) 707 final)

Amendment No. 1

Amend the sixth recital to read:

AMENDED TEXT

'Whereas it is in consequence essential to institute a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland within the framework of the Belfast integrated operation; whereas details of the content of the programme, its purpose, the timetable and plan for financing the integrated operation and of the extent to which Community financial instruments are involved must be provided by the United Kingdom Government;

whereas the same is true of the specific measures in the housing sector; whereas the recipient of Community aid must demonstrate that it is additional to national spending.'

TEXT PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION

'Whereas it is in consequence essential to institute a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland within the framework of the Belfast integrated operation on the basis of a pluri-annual programme to be presented by the United Kingdom Government, enabling reassessment of the additional character of the Community aid in relation to national expenditure.'

Amendment No. 2

Amend Article 1 to read:

AMENDED TEXT

Article 1

'A specific action on behalf of new housing in Northern Ireland is instituted within the framework of an integrated operation at Belfast.

Details of the content of the programme, its purpose, the timetable and the cost of the integrated operation and the specific action must be provided by the United Kingdom, which shall collect this information in close cooperation with the competent regional and local authorities of Northern Ireland.'

TEXT PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION

Article 1

'A specific action on behalf of new housing in Northern Ireland is instituted within the framework of an integrated operation at Belfast. The specific action shall be implemented according to a pluri-annual programme to be presented by the United Kingdom.'

Amendment No. 3

Amend Article 8 to read:

AMENDED TEXT

Article 8

'In agreement with the Commission, the United Kingdom shall take all measures needed to provide information on and to give publicity to the specific action. Details of the nature and scope of the action, its location, the final recipients of the aid and the percentage of Community funding shall be published each year in the Official Journal of the European Communities.'

TEXT PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION

Article 8

'In agreement with the Commission, the United Kingdom shall take all measures needed to provide information on and to give publicity to the specific action.'

Amendment No. 4

Amend Article 9 to read:

AMENDED TEXT

Article 9

'The specific action shall last for three years from 1 January 1982. It may be prolonged by the Council on a proposal from the Commission after consulting the European Parliament.'

TEXT PROPOSED BY THE COMMISSION

Article 9

'The specific action shall last for three years from 1 January 1982. It may be prolonged by the Council on a proposal from the Commission.'

Amendment No. 5

Amend the outline of details to be provided in the programme 'Northern Ireland housing' as follows:

Under the heading 'I. Introduction' add a new paragraph 3 to read:

- '3. Contribution of the specific Community action in the housing sector to the development of the Belfast region.'

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a regulation instituting a specific action on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland within the framework of an integrated operation in Belfast

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(81) 707 final)¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 1-851/81),
 - having regard to the report drawn up by the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning (Doc. 1-181/82)
 - having regard to Article 29 of the proposal for a regulation amending the Regulation establishing a European Regional Development Fund (Doc. 1-735/81),
 - having regard to its resolution of 22 April 1982 on the revision of the Regional Fund regulation (Doc. 1-61/82),
 - having regard to Item 5411 ('Community measures in the framework of integrated operations') of the 1982 Community budget,
 - having regard to its resolution of 19 June 1981 on the Community's regional policy and Northern Ireland,²
1. Considers that the exceptional situation which exists in the Belfast region justifies action to demonstrate Community solidarity;
 2. Welcomes the Commission's plan for a housing construction programme in Belfast and hopes that this project will form part of an integrated programme as suggested by the European Parliament;
 3. Stresses that the Community can, in exceptional cases where there is justification, contribute to the financing of housing construction on the basis of well-defined criteria and calls on the Commission to draw up Community criteria for this purpose;

¹OJ No. C 346 of 31 December 1981, p.1

²OJ No. C 172 of 13 July 1981

4. Regrets that the Commission has not so far presented to it a programme for an integrated operation to help Belfast as a whole, complete with details of the content, objectives, timetable and financing plan;
5. Calls on the Commission to forward to it immediately the programmes for integrated operations already under way (Naples and Belfast) and for future operations, together with details of the criteria that were used to select integrated operations;
6. Notes that the proposal for a regulation presented by the Commission covers only one aspect of the integrated operation in Belfast, namely the construction of housing;
7. Approves the proposal for a regulation with the proviso that the amendments proposed will be considered later, as it is convinced of the need to promote the construction of housing in Belfast;
8. Calls on the Commission to adopt the proposed amendments pursuant to Article 149(2) of the Treaty establishing the EEC.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

1. Introduction

The aim of the integrated operation is to coordinate the various Community financial instruments (ERDF, Social Fund, EAGGF - Guidance Section, aid from the ECSC, EIB and NCI) in order to improve the efficiency of the assistance they provide. According to the Commission, the objective is to permit vertical and horizontal coordination of these measures within strictly limited geographical areas in close cooperation with national, regional and local bodies and using the Member States' financial instruments.

It should be stressed that integrated operations are still in the experimental stage. Consequently, a decision as to their use in the future will be taken in the light of present experience.

The European Parliament has always welcomed Commission proposals to coordinate and harmonize the resources used.

Since 1980 the budget has included a line for these operations, namely Article 541 'Measures to promote integrated operations'.

On this basis work was begun in 1980 on an integrated operation in Naples (see the motion for a resolution by Mr PAPAPIETRO and others, Doc. 1-140/81).

Budget item 5411 ('Community measures in the framework of integrated operations') was introduced specifically to cover measures to be taken within the framework of integrated operations, which are outside the scope of the Community's existing financial instruments (for example, housing). In 1982 an appropriation of 16 million ECU was entered against this item. The remark on item 5411 reads 'This appropriation is to enable the Commission to finance, under the integrated operations programme and jointly with national or local authorities, specific measures outside the present framework of the Community's financial instruments.'

On 19 June 1981 the European Parliament adopted a motion for a resolution on the Community's regional policy and Northern Ireland¹, which deals in particular with the serious economic and social problems experienced by this

¹ OJ No. C 172 of 13 July 1981

region and stresses the high level of unemployment, the low average income and inadequate housing conditions, etc.

Paragraph 10 of this resolution reads: '(study) housing stock renewal and renovation of accommodation in certain areas (particularly Belfast) as a matter of urgency, since job creation must be linked with improved living conditions.'

In 1980/81 the Commission, in conjunction with the national, regional and local authorities in the United Kingdom, drew up proposals for an integrated operation in Belfast. It was clearly encouraged in this by Mrs Simone MARTIN's report¹ and by the motion for a resolution adopted by the European Parliament on 19 June 1981.

The European Parliament has not yet been informed of the content, objectives, cost or framework of this integrated operation in Belfast. The same is true of the integrated operation in Naples.

The Commission's proposal for a regulation on behalf of housing in Northern Ireland² clearly forms only part of the integrated operation in Belfast. It makes no mention of the framework for an integrated operation used in the title and is therefore not properly linked to the regional policy.

The choice of title would appear to be problematic in itself: while the Community's specific action must indeed promote the construction of housing in Northern Ireland it is set within the framework of an integrated operation which is geographically limited to Belfast.

The geographical scope of the proposal for a regulation is therefore still unclear. This lack of clarity is to be seen both in the text of the regulation and in the explanatory statement.

Basically, the objective of the amendments is to clarify the general framework in which the specific action was adopted.

¹ Doc. 1-177/81

² During its discussions on the 1982 budget the European Parliament repeatedly expressed the view that the existence of a budget line (explained in sufficient detail) constitutes a sufficient legal basis for action by the Commission. The proposal for a regulation is therefore superfluous.

