

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-1049/82

ORAL QUESTION (O-128/82) with debate

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

tabled by Mr DE PASQUALE, Mr HARRIS, Mr HUTTON, Mr MUNTINGH,
Mr NIKOLAOU, Mr PÖTTERING, Mr J. O. TAYLOR, Mr VON DER VRING
and Mr ZIAGAS

on behalf of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning
to the Council of the European Communities

Subject: Amendment of the regulation establishing the European
Regional Development Fund

The Council has still not adopted 'guidelines' for initiating the
conciliation procedure with the European Parliament on the revision
of the regulation on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

(a) Does the Council not consider that in this respect it has failed
to fulfil the obligations it set itself in the regulation?

(b) Does the Council not consider that this delay is seriously
prejudicing the improvement and development of Community regional
policy, the implementation of which greatly assists in alleviating
unemployment in the Community?

(c) What is the precise timetable which the Council intends to
establish for adopting its guidelines in connection with the
amendment of the ERDF regulation, with a view to opening the
conciliation procedure requested by the European Parliament?

JUSTIFICATION

1. Regulation (EEC) No. 724/75 establishing a European Regional Development Fund adopted by the Council on 18 March 1975¹, was amended on 6 February 1979 by Council Regulation (EEC) No. 214/79².
2. The regulation, even as amended, did not meet the wishes of the European Parliament. However, in the framework of the conciliation procedure³, the Council undertook to take special note of the Assembly's concerns during the next review, which, as specified in Article 22 of the Regulation⁴, was to take place before 1 January 1981.
3. On 23 May 1980, in the absence of proposals from the Commission, the European Parliament adopted a resolution⁵ tabled by Mr DE PASQUALE on behalf of the Committee on Regional Policy and Regional Planning⁶.

The European Parliament:

- 'Recalls that it has already stressed the serious shortcomings⁷ of the Fund Regulation and pointed out that the revision of the regulation in February 1979 did not remedy all these shortcomings and has limited the scope of the non-quota section;
- Recalls that the Council has undertaken, in the framework of the conciliation procedure with Parliament, 'to take special note of the Assembly's concerns' during the next review, which must take place before 1 January 1981;

¹OJ No. L 73, 21.3.1975, p.1

²OJ No. L 35, 9.2.1979, p.1

³The adoption and revision of the ERDF Regulation has given rise to 'conciliation' between the Council and the European Parliament. This procedure is initiated for 'Community acts of general application which have appreciable financial implications, and of which the adoption is not required by virtue of acts in existence' if 'the Council intends to depart from the Opinion adopted by the European Parliament'.

⁴Article 22: 'On a proposal from the Commission, the Council shall re-examine this regulation before 1 January 1981'.

⁵OJ No. C 147, 16.6.1980, p.117

⁶Doc. 1-171/80

⁷Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the resolution of 15.4.1980 (OJ No. C 117, 12.5.1980, p. 18).

- points out that the Council of Ministers has habitually failed to observe the deadlines set down for the establishment or revision of the ERDF¹.

4. The Commission considered it necessary to delay its proposals in order to take account of the report on the socio-economic situation of the Community regions and especially the guidelines established in the framework of the mandate of 30 May 1980.

Finally, on 29 October 1981, the Commission submitted a proposal for a Council regulation amending Regulation (EEC) No. 724/75 establishing the ERDF².

On 11 November 1981 the Council consulted the European Parliament, specifying in its accompanying letter that the current regulation expired on 31 December 1981 and requesting the European Parliament to deliver its opinion as soon as possible.

5. On 22 April 1982³ the European Parliament delivered an opinion on this proposal on the basis of a report by Mr DE PASQUALE⁴.

The European Parliament broadly supported the Commission's proposal and tabled a number of amendments, most of which the Commission decided to adopt⁵.

¹ In October 1972 the Heads of State and Government meeting in Paris invited the Community institutions to establish a European Regional Development Fund before 31 December 1973; in July 1973 the Commission submitted a proposal for a regulation establishing a European Regional Development Fund, which was not adopted by the Council until 8 March 1975; this regulation provided for re-examination before 1 January 1978 (Article 18); in June 1977 the Commission therefore submitted a proposal for an amendment which was not adopted by the Council until 6 February 1979.

² OJ No. C 336, 23.12.1981, p.60

³ OJ No. C 125, 17.5. 1982, p.108

⁴ Doc. 1-61/82 A+B

⁵ COM(82) 572 final

