

Cyprus and Malta: pre-accession strategy, implementation of operations

1999/0199(CNS) - 09/11/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to implement operations in the framework of the pre-accession strategy for Cyprus and Malta for the period 2000-2004. **CONTENT** : as for all the other candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commission is forwarding to the Council this proposal for a Regulation on the implementation of operations in the framework of the pre-accession strategy for Cyprus and Malta from the year 2000 (the date on which the last financial protocols expire). The principles of this strategy are the same as those which apply to the Central and Eastern European countries : 1) the establishment of accession partnerships with Cyprus and Malta acting on a proposal from the Commission, with the Council deciding by qualified majority, 2) support for priority operations to prepare for accession partnerships with Cyprus and Malta on the basis of analyses of their economic situations, taking account of the political and economic criteria and the obligations incumbent upon a Member State of the European Union (as defined by the Copenhagen European Council); 3) participation in certain Community programmes and agencies. There are specific objectives which are foreseen for the two islands : technical and financial support for the transposition of the *acquis communautaire* and the reinforcement of the administrative and juridical capacity of these States (training and other services, provision of work) and the financing of the control and evaluation tasks. However, one specific objective is provided for Cyprus, for which it is foreseen to finance operations facilitating the reconciliation of the two Cypriot communities. As in the case of the CEECs, Community funding would cover investment expenses but not the purchase of buildings and other recurring expenses. In any case, the financial contribution of the partners will be sought. The Commission will be responsible for appraising, approving and administering projects according to strict criteria defined in the proposal along the same main lines as for the CEECs (effectiveness and viability of the projects, respect for the environment, etc.,...). The Commission will be assisted in its task by a Committee created by the proposed Regulation. A decentralised procedure for the administration of assistance is provided for by way of a derogation as a function of the capacity of the partners to manage the assistance and to apply the minimal conditions of launching invitations to tender (an Annex sets out these criteria and minimal conditions). Provision is made to regularly evaluate the actions financed by the Community with a view to establishing whether the objectives are reached. Three years after this Regulation enters into force, the Commission will present an evaluation of all the operations financed by the Community under the Regulation to the European Parliament and the Council, and, if appropriate, proposals on how to follow up the initiatives. This Regulation shall replace the financial protocols for Cyprus and Malta from 2000 for a period of 5 years. It should be noted that the financial statement of the proposal provides for a budget of EUR 15 million for 2000 (allocations for subsequent years will be established every year by the budgetary authority in the framework of the budgetary procedure).