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## **REPORT**

on the implementation of the 'Youth' programme  
(2000/2316(INI))

Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport

Rapporteur: Lissy Gröner



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## PROCEDURAL PAGE

At the sitting of 18 January 2001 the President of Parliament announced that the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport had been authorised to draw up an own-initiative report, pursuant to Rule 163 of the Rules of Procedure, on the implementation of the 'Youth' programme. At the sitting of 15 March 2001 she announced that the Committee on Budgets had been asked for its opinion.

The Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport had appointed Lissy Gröner rapporteur at its meeting of 9 January 2001.

The committee considered the draft report at its meetings of 7 to 8 January and 22 January 2002.

At the latter meeting it adopted the motion for a resolution unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Michel Rocard, chairman; Vasco Graça Moura and Mario Mauro, vice-chairmen; Lissy Gröner, rapporteur; Nuala Ahern (for Raina A. Mercedes Echerer), Alexandros Alavanos, Pedro Aparicio Sánchez, Per-Arne Arvidsson (for Francis Decourrière), Christopher J.P. Beazley, Rolf Berend (for Ruth Hieronymi), Christine de Veyrac (for Marielle de Sarnez), Janelly Fourtou (for Theresa Zabell), Geneviève Fraisse, Lucio Manisco, Maria Martens, Pietro-Paolo Mennea, Domenico Mennitti, Antonio Mussa, Juan Ojeda Sanz, Barbara O'Toole, Doris Pack, Roy Perry, Christa Prets, Giorgio Ruffolo, Felekna Uca, Luckas Vander Taelen, Eurig Wyn, Sabine Zissener and Gianni Vattimo (for Ulpu Iivari pursuant to Rule 153(2)).

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached.

The report was tabled on 23 January 2002.

The deadline for tabling amendments will be indicated in the draft agenda for the relevant part-session.

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

### European Parliament resolution on the implementation of the 'Youth' programme (2000/2316(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Article 149 of the EC Treaty,
  - having regard to Decision 1031/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 April 2000 establishing the 'Youth' Community action programme<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the assessment of the European voluntary service<sup>2</sup> and the third phase of the 'Youth for Europe' programme (1995-1999)<sup>3</sup>,
  - having regard to its resolution of 9 March 1999 on a youth policy for Europe<sup>4</sup>,
  - having regard to Recommendation 2001/613/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers<sup>5</sup>,
  - having regard to Rule 163 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (A5-0019/2002),
- A. whereas the European Parliament grants the Commission discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget and therefore has both the right and the obligation to scrutinise the Commission's activities to ensure their sound financial management,
- B. whereas in recent years, the Parliament has stressed the necessity to better monitor the implementation of the Budget on a quantitative and qualitative basis and invited its specialised committees to ensure a close follow up according to annex VI of the Rules of Procedure,
- C. whereas Article 149 of the EC Treaty states, inter alia, that Community action should be aimed at developing the European dimension in education, encouraging mobility of students and teachers and encouraging the development of youth exchanges and of exchanges of socio-educational instructors,
- D. whereas the 'Youth' programme is one of the most important of the Community's support programmes in the field of education and youth and the only programme that is open to all young people regardless of their situation in terms of education and training,

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 117 of 18.5.2000, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> ECOTEC Research and Consulting Limited, 22.2.2001.

<sup>3</sup> Fondo Formación, Seville, Spain, in cooperation with Servicios Omicron s.a., Madrid, Spain, February 2001.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 175, 21.6.1999, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 215, 9.8.2001, p.30

- E. whereas it is particularly important, therefore, for the programme to be implemented successfully and effectively, as it will have a decisive bearing on the image young people and youth workers have of the Community,
- F. whereas the 'Youth' programme runs from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2006 and the financial framework for those seven years has been set at EUR 520 million,
- G. whereas previous experience with the 'Youth for Europe' and 'European voluntary service' programmes has shown that they promote mutual understanding between young people from different countries, generate greater awareness of Europe's diversity and have helped to foster participants' self-confidence, initiative and creativity,
- H. whereas certain deficiencies have also come to light in the implementation of these two programmes, such as excessively complex structures, the inordinately long time taken to process applications, lack of coordination between national agencies and considerable regional differences in the implementation of programmes,
- I. whereas the 'Youth' programme was not adopted until 13 April 2000, with the result that the programme got off to a belated start in the year 2000,
- J. whereas, consequently, the Commission will submit a complete report on its activities in the year 2000 only in mid-2002,
- K. whereas the inclusion of the candidate countries in the programme in the year 2000 was problematic, as the requisite legal bases were adopted only in the last quarter of the year for most countries,
- L. whereas the majority of funds are disbursed on a decentralised basis, with the result that the successful implementation of the programme depends to a great extent on the national agencies and on their cooperation with the Commission and each other,
- M. whereas, in implementing the programme, the Commission endeavours to reach out not only to established multinational organisations but also to local project organisers with no international experience, with the overriding aim of making the programme accessible to disadvantaged young people also,
- N. whereas the programme represents an administrative challenge, as it involves not only the 30 programme countries but also third countries and, as a rule, supports 'micro-projects' with funds of between EUR 5 000 and 10 000,
- O. whereas funds should be granted in the most open and unbureaucratic way possible, in order to keep the administrative costs for all concerned within acceptable limits,
- P. whereas the time taken to approve decentralised projects, i.e. projects approved by national agencies, is 2 to 3 months, whereas the time taken to approve centralised projects, i.e. those approved by the Commission, is at least 4 to 5 months,
- Q. whereas participants in the 'Youth' programme, particularly those from various candidate countries, still have problems obtaining visas for their stay,

## *General*

1. Notes that, in the year 2000, over 10 000 projects, involving a total of 103 784 participants, were funded under the 'Youth' programme;
2. Is pleased that, in the 2000 programme year, an implementation of appropriations rate of 98.5% was achieved (EUR 79.626 million out of the EUR 80.853 million for EU and EFTA countries), even though the programme was not adopted until 13 April 2000, and that the funds assigned to Action 1 (youth exchanges) and Action 2 (European voluntary service) were roughly in balance;
3. Notes with regret, however, that the Commission submitted different and conflicting figures as to the implementation of the programme in the year 2000, with the result that it was impossible to track in detail exactly how funds were disbursed;
4. Calls on the Commission to improve its reporting on the programme and, in future, to submit unambiguous and coherent figures and draw up, in conjunction with the national agencies, an annual report on the implementation of the programme;
5. Calls on all the programme countries to pay their contributions to the national agencies' funds promptly, and hopes that the candidate countries involved in the programme will make their financial contributions to the 'Youth' programme available as early as possible so as to ensure their participation in the programme;
6. Calls on the Commission, in the interests of more efficient implementation of the programme, to endeavour to ensure that there is no delay on their side in paying the funds allocated to the national agencies under the programme;
7. Reminds the Member States that the 'Youth' programme is intended to support and supplement actions carried out in and by the Member States, and urges the governments of all the programme countries not to use the 'Youth' programme as a pretext for reducing the funds they themselves provide for youth exchange programmes, but to give their national youth policy an additional, European dimension;
8. Is concerned about the administrative bottlenecks created by the important part of decentralised management of the programme and the focus of centralised activities, run by the Commission on a coordinating role; urges the Commission to ensure that political orientations, control and budgetary decisions remain the Institutions' full responsibility in the future context of delegation to national bodies;

## *Implementation of the programme*

9. Notes that the decision establishing the 'Youth' Community action programme stated from the outset that all young people, without discrimination, should have access to the activities of the programme and that the Commission and the Member States should make special efforts to help young people who have to overcome particular difficulties to take part in the programme;

10. Regrets that, particularly in the case of the decentralised projects, disadvantaged young people were still not participating in the programme in sufficient numbers in the year 2000 and that, in particular, the shortened European voluntary service has not yet met with a satisfactory level of acceptance;
11. Calls on the Commission, in cooperation with the national agencies, to carry out an immediate examination of the obstacles that continue to deter disadvantaged young people from participating and use its findings as a basis for making improvements, so that the objectives of the programme may be achieved by the year 2002 at the latest;
12. Calls on the Commission to scrutinise the implementation of the programme so as to ensure that the ratio of male to female participants is approximately equal, particularly in the case of disadvantaged young people;
13. Calls on the Commission to promote the creation of projects favouring the integration of young immigrants in Europe;
14. Welcomes the Commission's efforts to achieve better cooperation between the national agencies by regular meetings, seminars and further training courses. To this end, calls on the Commission to ensure that the national agencies apply the selection criteria evenly, strictly and effectively;
15. Calls on the states taking part in the 'Youth' programme to see that participants obtain visas without excessive red tape by instructing their own competent departments to issue visas automatically, and free of charge, to all participants in projects that have been approved by the national agency;
16. Calls on the Commission, together with the national agencies and the European Parliament, to hold an action week in the second half of 2002 to raise public awareness of the 'Youth' programme's projects and objectives;

#### *Administration of the programme*

17. Notes that the administrative costs of this programme, which involves almost 30 Commission staff, average annual costs of the national agencies (EU/EEA) of around EUR 12 million (EU and national contributions), EUR 3.3 million for technical support and several more million euro for information and seminars, are high in relation to the total programme funds of barely EUR 80 million;
18. Takes the view that the high costs of the administration of the programme are due to its special features, such as the large number of small projects and the support given to small and inexperienced organisations, but above all that these costs can be justified if the Commission really succeeds in getting the message across to new categories of participants and including significant numbers of disadvantaged young people in the programme, and so calls on the Commission to pay particular attention to that aspect when reporting on the programme;



19. Welcomes the Commission's decision to discontinue the practice of the Commissioners as a body approving projects under the 'Youth' programme, in order to speed up the approval process, and calls on the Commission to further simplify and streamline its internal procedures for the approval of projects, so as to make it possible to significantly reduce the four- to five-month period currently required to a maximum of three months;
20. Supports the Commission's move to fund projects primarily by means of flat-rate amounts, as this offers applicants a more certain basis on which to make plans and reduces administrative costs for all concerned, welcomes the measures to simplify administrative procedures set out in the programme of work for 2002 and calls on the Commission to take further steps in that direction;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the EFTA states and the accession countries.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### *1. The 'Youth' action programme: background information*

Before examining in more detail the implementation of the 'Youth' programme by the Commission, it would be appropriate to draw attention once again to the main substance of that programme.

#### *1.1. General framework*

The 'Youth' programme was adopted on 13 April 2000 and runs from 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2006, i.e. seven years. The financial framework for that period has been set at EURO 520 million (budget line B3-1010; 2000: 76.07 million. Commitment appropriations, 2001: 66.75 million). The programme is aimed at young people between the age of 15 and 25 and at youth workers and groups.

The programme countries are the Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and the candidate countries (with the exception, at present, of Turkey and Malta, although there are plans for them to participate in future). The candidate countries do not participate, however, in activities involving other third countries.

As the programme is strongly decentralised, with a high percentage of funds (70%) being paid via the national agencies, the latter play an important role in its implementation.

#### *1.2. Fields of action*

The programme supports measures in the following areas.

##### *Action 1 – Youth for Europe*

Support for meetings of groups of young people living in one of the participating countries. It is also possible to support meetings between young people from the European Union and from third countries, provided such meetings are multilateral.

##### *Action 2 – European voluntary service*

EVS projects enable young people to serve as volunteers in another country for a period normally lasting 6-12 months. One of the countries involved in each project must be an EU Member State. Provision is also made for limited-duration projects lasting for a minimum of three weeks and a maximum of six months, which are aimed in particular at disadvantaged young people who might have problems opting for a longer period of voluntary service.

### *Action 3 – Youth initiatives*

Youth initiatives are projects independently devised and carried out by groups of at least four young people over a period of between three months and one year. There is also provision for 'future capital' projects for young people who have carried out European voluntary service within the last two years and live in one of the countries participating in the programme. These are designed to enable volunteers to give others the benefit of their experience or to support their further personal or professional development.

### *Action 4 – Joint actions*

Actions conducted jointly with the Leonardo da Vinci II and/or Socrates II programmes are designed to support initiatives that transcend the boundaries of those individual programmes.

### *Action 5 – Support measures*

Support measures provide back-up for activities connected with the 'Youth' programme (or its objectives) in the fields of cooperation and partnership, training and information for young people.

#### 1.3. The programme's precursors, 'Youth for Europe' and 'European voluntary service'

Before the establishment of the 'Youth' action programme, the EU had already gained experience in connection with the earlier 'Youth for Europe' and 'European voluntary service' programmes. The experience gained in these programmes helped shape the 'Youth' programme and is still applicable to the implementation of the current programme.

In the years 2000 and 2001, external assessments of both programmes were carried out. According to the Commission, the assessment of the 'Youth for Europe' programme showed that the aims of enhancing mutual understanding and awareness of Europe's diversity had been achieved. Thanks to the programme, participants had developed greater self-confidence and could play a more active role in the life of the community. According to the Commission, the assessment of European voluntary service during the period from 1996 to 1999 had also shown that it had had a positive effect on participants, fostering increased self-confidence, initiative and creativity and encouraging them to develop new talents and a new awareness of other cultures.

The weaknesses that had come to light in the 'Youth for Europe' programme were mainly lack of coordination between the national agencies, complex structures (application forms, reports, methods of payment) and significant regional differences in the implementation of the programme. The weaknesses identified in the EVS were the inordinately long time – up to four months – taken to process centralised projects implemented at European level and the role of the organisations sending volunteers abroad, which had not been fully developed.

## **2. *Implementation of the programme in the year 2000***

As the 'Youth' programme was not adopted until 13 April 2000, it got off to a very belated start that year. The Commission set two deadlines for the submission of proposals, 1 May 2000, in other words almost immediately after the adoption of the programme the previous month, and 31 July 2000. The ensuing delay in the approval of projects meant that all the relevant funds were disbursed in the last five months of the year 2000.

### **2.1. The programme in figures**

Including the contributions of the EFTA countries, in the year 2000 EUR 77.523 million were available under budget line B3-1010 and EUR 3.3 million were available for administrative expenditure under budget line B3-1010A, in other words EUR 80.853 million in total. The Commission disbursed EUR 79.626 million of that sum, thereby achieving an implementation rate of 98.5%. The total budget was augmented by the contributions that fell due under the association agreements with the candidate countries, producing a total available budget of EUR 93.572 million. As most of the agreements were signed only in the course of the year 2000, these contributions materialised only gradually.

It proved somewhat difficult to reconstruct the process of allocating and utilising appropriations in the case of individual actions, as the Commission gave different figures in different documents, which seems to indicate that there are still some weaknesses in the administration of the programme.

According to the most recently submitted figures, the structure of expenditure is as follows for the different actions:

Action 1 (youth exchange)	EUR 20.5 million
Action 2 (European voluntary service)	EUR 24.9 million
Action 3 (youth initiatives)	EUR 6 million
Action 5 (support measures)	EUR 23.6 million

There were no joint actions (Action 4) in the year 2000.

Expenditure under Actions 1 and 2 is roughly in balance, in line with Parliament's wishes. A particularly high proportion of expenditure in the year 2000 was devoted to support measures. The Commission paid the running costs for the national agencies for two years (2000 and 2001) from the budget appropriations for the year 2000. It justified this on the grounds that less funds were available for the programme in 2001 than in 2000, and so economising on the amount paid to the national agencies in 2001 would make more funds available for projects.

The Member States pay at least 50% of the costs of the national agencies. There is no direct and measurable co-financing of projects by the Member States. The co-financing of projects is assured by the participants themselves or by payments in kind, such as services performed free of charge or the provision of free premises or equipment, etc.

According to the Commission's activity report, 10 029 projects were financed in the year 2000, with a total of 103 784 participants. 2798 participants were involved in European voluntary service, with the average EU subsidy per participant being EUR 9000.

## 2.2. Successes and problems

Due to the late start-up of the programme, the Commission will not be able to submit a full report on the year 2000 until mid-2002. To date there is only a short activity report, which means that we can make only a very limited assessment of the programme's successes and shortcomings at this stage.

One important objective of the 'Youth' programme is to include a higher proportion of disadvantaged young people in the programme. According to the Commission, disadvantaged young people were included in 50% of the centralised projects, but in the case of decentralised projects, the proportion of such young people varied greatly. No more exact information is available as yet. The limited-duration voluntary service which was designed with disadvantaged young people particularly in mind does not appear to be operating satisfactorily as yet. In any event, the target of 20% of decentralised funding was not reached.

There was evidently no attempt to break down the participants in the programme according to sex in the year 2000. It is impossible to say, therefore, whether both sexes were represented equally in the various actions. This is an aspect that the Commission should look into in future, however.

The inclusion of candidate countries in the programme was problematic in the year 2000. For most such countries, the corresponding legal basis was adopted only in the last quarter of the year, with the result that the Commission was able to include them in the programme only very belatedly. There were also difficulties in connection with the payment of some countries' contributions to the 'Youth' programme. Unfortunately, young people from some candidate countries still have problems obtaining visas from certain Member States even in connection with projects under the 'Youth' programme. This should be remedied as a matter of urgency.

## 2.3. Administration of the programme

The 'Youth' programme is not just a programme involving 30 programme countries (plus additional third countries in certain sectors), but also consists mostly of micro-projects accounting for roughly EUR 5000 to 10 000 each. The programme is also aimed principally at individuals, groups and organisations that do not necessarily have any previous experience with international projects or with applying for European funds. Furthermore, disadvantaged young people are one of the programme's main target groups.

It is particularly important, therefore, that the granting of funds should be as open and unbureaucratic as possible. The administrative costs involved should be kept within reasonable bounds for beneficiaries as well as for the Commission and the national agencies. It is a positive step that the Commission introduced a new financing system in 2000. It decided to dispense to a large extent with detailed co-financing plans in favour of a system of flat-rate payments. The system appears to have proved successful as it has not only simplified

the administration of the programme, but also gives applicants the advantage of knowing in advance the amount of money they can expect to receive.

According to Commission information, decisions on applications for decentralised projects (by the national agencies) took between two and three months. The Commission, however, needed from four to five months to reach decisions on applications for centralised projects, although the committee of representatives of Member States was not involved in the process. The assessment of the previous 'European voluntary service' programme had already highlighted the fact that four months was too long a period for the processing of applications. Yet it seems that there has been no improvement as yet when it comes to the new youth programme. The Commission's internal decision-making structures are evidently very laborious: the Directorate-General for Culture and Education, which administers the programme, must consult all the other services before finally approving an application, and until mid-2000 the College of Commissioners had to take the final decision.

On the other hand, the lack of cooperation between national agencies criticised in connection with the 'Youth for Europe' programme appears to have been remedied to some extent. To that end, the Commission carries out regular meetings together with all the agencies.

The administrative costs of the 'Youth' programme as a whole seem very high, even if one takes account of the fact that it comprises a multitude of small projects (EUR 3.3 million for technical support, almost 30 Commission staff working exclusively with the programme, millions spent on information and training, and an annual EU subsidy of circa EUR 7 million for the national agencies, which is matched by an equal amount from the Member States). The Commission justifies these high costs on the grounds that small organisations with no experience at international level have to be included in order to enable disadvantaged young people in particular to have access to the programme. In future, action must be taken to ascertain whether that objective is really being achieved.

22 January 2002

## **OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS**

for the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport

on implementation of the Youth programme  
(2000/2316(INI))

on implementation of the Socrates programme  
(2000/2315(INI))

on implementation of the Culture 2000 programme  
(2000/2317(INI))

Draftsman: Brigitte Wenzel-Perillo

### **PROCEDURE**

The Committee on Budgets appointed Brigitte Wenzel-Perillo draftsman at its meeting of 27 February 2001.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 22 January 2002.

At the last meeting it adopted the following conclusions unanimously.

The following were present for the vote: Terence Wynn, chairman; Reimer Böge, Anne Elisabet Jensen, vice-chairmen; Brigitte Wenzel-Perillo, rapporteur; Kathalijne Maria Buitenweg, Joan Colom i Naval, John Alexander Corrie (for James E.M. Elles), Den Dover, Bárbara Dührkop Dührkop, Salvador Garriga Polledo, Neena Gill, Jutta D. Haug, Christopher Heaton-Harris, Ian Stewart Hudghton, John Joseph McCartin, Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar, Guido Podestà, Per Stenmarck, Kyösti Tapio Virrankoski and Ralf Walter.

## SHORT JUSTIFICATION

In the budgetary guidelines for 2002, the Parliament stressed the necessity to improve the follow-up of budget implementation both under quantitative and qualitative aspects in line with the recommendation already made in the Progress Report <sup>1</sup>(Budget 2001) the work should involve all Parliament committees responsible for spending programmes and should begin with the monitoring of the 2001 budget mainly aimed to the preparation of the budget 2002, but also to a better parliamentary control over the Commission's prerogatives to implement the Budget.

In March 2001 the following procedure was agreed by the Committee on Budgets :

- *Creation of an "evaluation group", coordinated by the general rapporteurs (N and N+1) and should be composed by the budgetary rapporteurs (N+1 & N) of the specialised committees, including committee on budgetary control.*
- *Selection of a small number of programmes on which to concentrate its efforts at the suggestion of the budgetary rapporteurs (N+N1) of the specialised committee and/or general rapporteurs . The programmes selected should as far as possible reflects the work already underway or planned in the specialised committees.*
- *Organisation of a number of trials "evaluation meetings" could be organised by the Members of the group interested on a particular subject. On the basis of the answers and information supplied by the Commission, the evaluation group could meet the managers of a specific programme with their budgetary staff together with the relevant division of DG BUDG.*
- *After each evaluation meeting, the group will draw up the conclusions of the evaluation which could then be presented and discussed in each committee. The object would be to allow the managers of the programme to respond to questions and criticism and to commit themselves to better performance.*
- *The conclusions should be used as a basis for decisions on the implementation of the budget of year N and for the preparation of the Budget N+1. The evaluations could constitute the basis for all decisions on transfers proposed during the year as well as decisions on the allocation to be given to the programme in year N+1.*

The trial investigations concerned the programmes Socrates, Youth and Culture 2000, on the basis of four main reasons: Parliament's priorities, significant envelopes, recent renewal and legislative process initiated by the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport.

On 29.05.2001, the Evaluation Group held a technical meeting in presence of 9 representatives of the Commission mainly from DG BUDG and EAC on the basis of a standard implementation sheet prepared by the Budgets Committee secretariat.

During the July plenary session, the general rapporteurs had a political meeting with the rapporteurs of Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport. It was decided that a questionnaire would be sent to the Commission services to clarify the questions raised

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<sup>1</sup> 2001 BUDGETARY PROCEDURE PROGRESS REPORT AS REQUIRED BY BUDGET AUTHORITY- WORKING DOCUMENT OF THE COMMISSION SERVICES



by the members during the technical meeting. The answers to the questionnaire have been forwarded to COBU which discussed the output at its meeting of 5 November 2001. The conclusions hereafter summarise the debate.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on Budgets calls on the Committee on Culture, Youth, Education, the Media and Sport, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following points in its motions for resolutions:

### Budgetary Aspects

Whereas in recent years, the Parliament has stressed the necessity to better monitor the implementation of the Budget on a quantitative and qualitative basis and invited its specialised committees to ensure a close follow up according to annex VI of the Rules of Procedure;

Welcomes the initiative of creating an evaluation group in view of assessing the performance of the major programmes as well as the difficulties encountered by the Commission in the course of implementation; considers that the practice should be developed on the basis of new instruments and appropriate structures to be set up in parallel by EP and the Commission;

Stresses the fact that the decisions of Budget 2002 are in coherence with the principles stated in the Guidelines for 2002 to make a link between implementation and budgetary decisions, in the particular case of Socrates, Youth and Culture 2000 additional appropriations were decided on the result of the evaluation and on the basis of the large demand existing within the Member States;

Notices that the low level of implementation for Socrates, Youth and Culture 2000 on the first year of the new programmes is due to lengthy and heavy internal procedures; expects the Commission to make real efforts to shorten the cycle of the projects and to ensure the continuity of the programmes in future on the basis of its commitment in the common declarations adopted in the 2002 Budget and for reasons of sound management and credibility towards the citizens and the taxpayers.

Is concerned about the administrative bottlenecks created by the important part of decentralised management of those programmes and the focus of centralised activities, run by the Commission on a coordinating role; urges the Commission to ensure that political orientations, control and budgetary decisions remain the Institutions' full responsibility in the future context of delegation to national bodies.