

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3027/00

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to the Commission

Subject: Notice on town-twinning grants

In the context of the award of town-twinning grants, people from all parts of Europe have in the past sat round the table together in order to get to know one another, exchange experiences, work out projects and seek common solutions to problems. There is no doubt that the flexible promotion of town-twinning up to now has helped to develop close ties between people in Europe.

In its notice on town-twinning grants¹, the Commission has however announced that the previous procedure will be changed and that it will issue before the end of the year 2000 a call for proposals focusing on priority topics, with clearly defined selection criteria for the award of grants.

This notice has aroused a great deal of uncertainty in the communes of Baden-Württemberg over the arrangements which the Commission intends to make in future for the promotion of town-twinning. Can the Commission answer the following questions in particular?

1. How will the closing date for applications be calculated in future (up to now it has been a three-month period)?
2. How many calls for proposals for town-twinning will it issue each year?
3. What precisely does it mean by 'priority topics' and will this make it more difficult to establish new town-twinning arrangements or to revive existing ones?
4. Is it aware, in addition, that the application procedure is disproportionately complicated, especially for small communes, and can it see any way of simplifying that procedure?

¹ OJ C 238, 22.8.2000, p.7.