

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3058/02

by Jo Leinen (PSE)

to the Council

Subject: Bank guarantees for non-governmental organisations supporting Russian media as part of the Tacis programme

Tacis service contracts provide for bank guarantees for Commission funding in terms of the scale of the contract. This means that non-governmental organisations, working without profit, are in practice excluded from these invitations to tender. Is this in line with the Commission and Parliament's efforts to promote civil society and make use of the expertise of NGOs in relevant projects?

The case in question concerns projects for promoting democracy and human rights in Russia, carried out in accordance with the general Tacis rules. NGOs are generally speaking not able to obtain loans or bank guarantees in the EUR 700 000 to 2 million bracket. This would automatically exclude NGOs from such projects. Can the Council remedy this situation?