

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1276/03
by Dana Scallon (PPE-DE)
to the Council

Subject: Regulation on sexual and reproductive health and rights

Regarding the Regulation on sexual and reproductive health and rights, Members of the European Parliament were asked to vote in plenary (13 February 2003) for an increase in the budget up to EUR 73.95 million (Amendment 46) by mobilising the flexibility instrument in order to fund this increased budget line.

Members of Parliament's Development Committee and the EPP-ED Group were informed that this increase followed, and was in conformity with, a Council request.

In the meantime, my office was informed by representatives at Commission and Council level that this requested increase was in fact a unilateral move on behalf of the European Parliament. Furthermore, I am informed it was at the request of the rapporteur. If this is so, it would mean that a conciliation procedure is needed at Council level in order to reallocate funds in the context of EU external actions (Chapter 4).

Could the Council please clarify if it did request the above increase or not?

According to Budget Commissioner Schreyer's office, Budget 2003 is already engaged and fully allocated. Does the Council intend therefore a conciliation procedure in order to reallocate funds in the context of the EU external action? Could the flexibility instruments be mobilised for each year of this programme 2003-2006? Regarding the agreement of the programme itself, could the Council please clarify under which procedure it will act: qualified majority or unanimous vote?