

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3068/03
by Hugues Martin (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Funding of bodies which play host to an Info-Point Europe

According to my sources, following the entry into force, on 1 January 2003, of the new Financial Regulation applicable to all the European institutions (Council Regulation (EC) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002¹) and its implementing procedures, the operating subsidies hitherto granted to bodies which play host to an Info-Point Europe will henceforth be awarded on the basis of a new procedure. Instead of receiving automatic funding, these information centres will be required to take part in an invitation-to-tender procedure, failing which they will not be eligible for subsidies.

In addition to the operating subsidies, the bodies in question also received logistical support, such as supplies of publications, access to the 'relays and networks Intranet', back-up from the relays and networks helpdesk, in the form of documentary and technical assistance, from the meeting of relay heads, etc. It has been decided that bodies which submit an appropriate request will continue to receive this logistical support, on a temporary basis, in 2004.

This new procedure, which is intended to increase transparency in connection with the award of funding, raises three questions to which the European Commission alluded without providing a detailed answer:

- What criteria will be used to select the bodies which respond to the invitations to tender?
- Will the logistical support measures continue after 2004?
- In more general terms, the European Commission is now considering new forms of cooperation which will ensure that information is readily available to the public locally, whilst complying with the new rules laid down in the above-mentioned Financial Regulation. Can the Commission be more precise on this point?

¹ OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1.