



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 15.11.2006
COM(2006) 707 final

2005/0041 (COD)

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION

**pursuant to Article 251(2), third subparagraph, point (c), of the EC Treaty on the
European Parliament's amendments to the Council's common position**

regarding the

**proposal for a Decision establishing for the period 2007-2013 the programme "Europe
for citizens" (COM(2005) 116 final)**

AMENDING THE PROPOSAL OF THE COMMISSION
pursuant to Article 250 (2) of the EC Treaty

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1. INTRODUCTION

Article 251(2), third subparagraph, point (c), of the EC Treaty requires the Commission to deliver an opinion on amendments proposed by the European Parliament at second reading. The Commission's position on the amendments adopted by the European Parliament is set out below.

2. BACKGROUND

Date of transmission of the proposal to the European Parliament and the Council (document COM(2005) 116 final – 2005/0041(COD)):	14 April 2005
Date of the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee:	26 October 2005
Date of the opinion of the Committee of the Regions:	17 November 2005
Date of the opinion of the European Parliament at first reading:	5 April 2006
Date of Council political agreement:	18 May 2006
Date of adoption of the common position:	25 September 2006
Date of opinion at second reading:	25 October 2006

3. PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL

The purpose of the proposal is to establish a programme to promote active European citizenship, entitled "Europe for citizens", which will take over from the present civic participation programme (2004-2006) as from 1 January 2007. The programme is intended to help meet a major challenge facing the European Union, namely to bridge the gap between citizens and the European institutions by giving citizens the opportunity to participate actively in the building of Europe. The proposed programme, while ensuring the continuation of the civic participation programme now coming to a close, opens the way for new activities with a view to encouraging cooperation among citizens and civil society organisations from the various participating countries.

It includes four actions addressing the issue of active European citizenship in a complementary manner: “Active citizens for Europe” (I), “Active civil society in Europe” (II), “Together for Europe” (III) and “Active European Remembrance” (IV).

4. OPINION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE AMENDMENTS ADOPTED BY THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The Commission accepts the four amendments adopted by the European Parliament. These amendments are the result of an overall compromise between the European Parliament and the Council with a view to the second reading. They are in line with the objectives of the Commission’s initial proposal and the Communication from the Commission on the common position.

The first amendment adds the promotion of tolerance to the aims of the programme.

The second amendment is a technical one, changing the period between publication of the Decision and its entry into force from 20 days to one day, which will speed up the implementation of the programme.

The third and fourth amendments relate to the percentages of the budget allocated to Actions I and II. At least 45% of the budget will be allocated to Action I and approximately 31% to Action II.

5. CONCLUSION

Pursuant to Article 250(2) of the EC Treaty, the Commission is amending its proposal as described above.

6. STATEMENT BY THE COMMISSION

The Commission made a unilateral statement on the occasion of the adoption of the common position (see Annex I).

ANNEX

Statement by the Commission on the budgetary envelope

The Commission would draw the legislative authority's attention to the need, by the time of final publication in the OJ, for the financial envelope referred to in the basic act to be quoted at current prices. That is the usual budgetary practice and serves to make compliance with the legislative authority's decision quite clear. For the programme in question, the figure at current prices amounts to €215 million.