

**Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community action programme in the field of civil protection**

(1999/C 28/07)

*COM(1998) 768 final — 98/0354(CNS)*

*(Submitted by the Commission on 16 December 1998)*

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 235 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions,

Whereas the actions taken by the Community in this field since 1985 have made it possible progressively to develop cooperation between the Member States; whereas the resolutions adopted since 1987 <sup>(1)</sup> and the Council Decision of 19 December 1997 <sup>(2)</sup> establishing a Community Action Programme in the field of Civil Protection constitutes the basis for this cooperation;

Whereas the individual actions undertaken by the Community to implement the programme contribute to the protection of persons, environment and property in the event of natural and technological disasters;

Whereas the Community programme of policy and action in relation to the environment and sustainable development <sup>(3)</sup> presented by the Commission foresees that the Community's activities will be stepped up in particular in the field of environmental emergencies, whereas the same programme calls for these activities to take account of scientific research and technological development;

Whereas the Community Action Programme will continue to help to develop cooperation in this field even more effectively; whereas the programme should be based to a large extent on experience already gained in this field;

Whereas, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, Community cooperation supports and supplements national policies in the field of Civil Protection in order to make them more effective; whereas pooling of experience and mutual assistance will help to reduce the loss of human life, injuries and economic and environmental damage throughout the Community;

Whereas the Community action programme will provide transparency as well as consolidate and strengthen the different actions in continued pursuit of the objectives of the Treaty;

Whereas action to prevent risks and damage as well as provide information and prepare those responsible for and involved in Civil Protection in the Member States is important and increases the degree of preparedness for accidents; whereas it is also important to undertake Community action to improve techniques and methods of response and rehabilitation after emergencies;

Whereas it is also important to undertake action targeted at the general public so as to help European citizens to protect themselves more effectively;

Whereas an advisory committee will assist the Commission in managing the action programme;

Whereas the provisions of this Decision take over from 1 January 2000, from the action programme set up through the Council Decision of 19 December 1997 and ending on 31 December 1999;

Whereas the Treaty does not provide, for the adoption of this Decision, powers other than those of Article 235,

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ C 176, 4.7.1987, p. 1; OJ C 44, 23.2.1989, p. 3; OJ C 315, 14.12.1990, p. 1; OJ C 313, 10.11.1994, p. 1.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 8, 14.1.1998, p. 20.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ C 138, 17.5.1993, p. 5.

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

*Article 1*

1. A Community action programme in the field of civil protection (hereinafter called 'the programme') is hereby established for the period 1 January 2000 to 31 December 2004.

2. The programme is intended to support and supplement Member States' efforts at national, regional and local levels for the protection of persons, environment and property in the event of natural and technological disasters. The aim is also to facilitate cooperation and mutual assistance between Member States in this field.

*Article 2*

1. The Commission shall implement the actions under the programme.

2. A three-year rolling plan to implement the programme, to be reviewed annually, shall be adopted, in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 4 and on the basis *inter alia* of the information supplied by Member States to the Commission. The Commission may, when necessary, arrange additional actions to those under the programme. Such additional actions shall be assessed in the light of the priorities set and the financial resources available.

3. Actions under the programme and financial arrangements for Community contribution are set out in the Annex.

*Article 3*

1. The rolling plan to implement the programme shall contain the individual actions to be undertaken.

2. Individual actions shall be selected primarily on the basis of the following criteria:

- a) contribution to preventing the risks and damage to persons, environment and property in the event of natural and technological disasters;
- b) contribution to increasing the degree of preparedness of those involved in civil protection in the Member States, in order to increase their ability to respond to an emergency;
- c) contribution to improving techniques and methods of response and rehabilitation after emergencies;
- d) contribution to public information, education and awareness, so as to help citizens to protect themselves more effectively.

3. Each individual action shall be implemented in close cooperation with the competent authorities at national, regional and local level in the Member States.

4. Where relevant, actions under the present programme shall seek to contribute to the integration of civil protection objectives in other Community and Member States policies and actions.

5. Each action shall take account of the results of the Community and national research in the relevant fields.

*Article 4*

For the implementation of the programme, the Commission shall be assisted by an advisory committee composed of representatives of the Member States and chaired by the representative of the Commission.

The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee a draft of the measures to be taken. The committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft, within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the opinion delivered by the committee and shall inform the committee of the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.

The Commission may also refer other matters relating to civil protection to the advisory committee.

*Article 5*

The Commission shall evaluate the implementation of the programme at mid-term and before its end, and report by 30 September 2002 and 31 March 2004 to the Council and the European Parliament.

*Article 6*

This Decision shall apply with effect from 1 January 2000.

*Article 7*

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

## ANNEX

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION <sup>(1)</sup>

Action	Financing arrangements
<p><b>A. Major projects of general interest</b></p> <p>Major projects of general interest for all Member States or a number of them and involving a process for enhancing civil protection capabilities for dealing with disasters in certain significant aspects, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— prevention;</li> <li>— preparedness;</li> <li>— response;</li> <li>— restoration;</li> <li>— information of the public, so as to help the citizens to protect themselves more effectively as well as to contribute to safety in connection with the free movement of citizens within the Community.</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution: 75 % of the total costs of the action.</p>
<p><b>B. Training</b></p> <p>1. <i>Workshops and courses</i> <sup>(1)</sup></p> <p>Organisation of workshops or training courses bringing together high-level experts, technical specialists and technicians from the Member States permitting, within each discipline, the mutual sharing of experience by means of discussions in specific terms of their methods, techniques and means with a view to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— increasing their degree of preparedness;</li> <li>— creating the conditions for the establishment of a human network permitting more effective operational cooperation between Member States in case of emergency.</li> </ul>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution: 75 % of the total cost of the action, with a ceiling of ECU 75 000 per action.</p>
<p>2. <i>Exchange of experts and technicians</i></p> <p>Organisation of the secondment of experts to the emergency services of another Member State in order to allow the experts to gain experience or appraise different techniques used or to study the approaches taken within other emergency services or other relevant bodies.</p> <p>Organisation of exchanges of Member States' experts, specialists and technicians enabling them to present or to follow short training courses.</p>	<p>Maximum 75 % of the experts' travel and subsistence expenses and 100 % of the costs of coordinating the system.</p>

<sup>(1)</sup> The specific actions eligible to other Community instruments will not be financed in the frame of this programme.

Action	Financing arrangements
<p>3. <i>Exercises</i> <sup>(1)</sup></p> <p>The exercises are intended to compare methods, to stimulate cooperation between Member States and to back up progress in coordination of the national civil protection services, with a view to improving <i>inter alia</i> the effectiveness and speed of response in case of emergency.</p>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution: 50 % of the costs of participating observers from other Member States and for organising the associated workshops, preparing the exercise and the final report, etc.</p>
<p><b>C. Other actions</b></p>	
<p>1. <i>Pilot projects</i> <sup>(1)</sup> <sup>(2)</sup></p> <p>Projects designed to increase the capacity for and speed of response in the initial stages of crises in the different regions of Member States. These projects are aimed mainly at improving means, techniques and procedures also in the isolated and ultraperipheral regions. Their scope should be such as to interest all or several Member States and it is intended to give them the maximum dissemination and demonstration throughout the Union for their implementation.</p>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution: 50 % of the total cost of each pilot project, with a ceiling of ECU 200 000 for each project.</p>
<p>The greatest possible encouragement should be given to multinational projects.</p>	
<p>2. <i>Support actions</i> <sup>(1)</sup></p> <p>Support actions for the development of particular civil protection aspects <sup>(2)</sup>.</p>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution: 50 % of the total cost of each action, with a ceiling of ECU 30 000 per action</p>
<p>3. <i>Conferences and events</i> <sup>(1)</sup></p> <p>Conferences and other Civil Protection events which are open to a large audience, and involving several Member States.</p>	<p>Maximum Community financial contribution 30 % of the total cost of the arrangement with a ceiling of ECU 50 000 per action.</p>
<p>4. <i>Information and other actions</i></p> <p>Distribution of information, publications and production of exhibition material on the Community cooperation in the field of civil protection. Other actions aiming to a better appreciation of the results of the civil protection activities, such as statistics, economic analysis. Evaluation of the programme.</p>	<p>Community financial contribution: 100 % of the costs.</p>
<p><b>D. Mobilisation of expertise</b></p> <p>Mobilisation of expertise to intervene in the event of an emergency situation to reinforce the system set-up by the authorities of a Member State or a third country facing natural or technological disasters.</p>	<p>Community financial contribution: 100 % of the costs for the experts' missions.</p>

<sup>(1)</sup> The only eligible actions are those interesting all Member States or a significant number of them.

<sup>(2)</sup> The only eligible actions must be in accordance with the priorities yearly defined within the management committee.