

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 18.10.2004
COM(2004) 677 final

Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

ON THE COMMUNITY POSITION IN RELATION TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE TO BE DECIDED ON BY THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL ESTABLISHED BY THE EUROPE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND ROMANIA

(presented by the Commission)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. The European Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Romania, of the other part, which entered into force on February 1995, provides, in Article 111 thereof, that the Association Council may decide to set up any other special committee or body that can assist it in carrying out its duties.

2. Though the establishment of a consultative mechanism for dialogue between the regional and local authorities of the two parties is not explicitly provided for in the aforementioned Europe Agreement, the Commission proposes that a Joint Consultative Committee representing the regional and local authorities of both parties be set up by the Association Council in support of the keen interest expressed, in this respect, by both sides, represented by the Committee of the Regions, of the part of the Community, and by the Romanian Liaison Committee for Co-operation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities, of the part of Romania.

3. The proposed Joint Consultative Committee is intended to constitute a forum for dialogue and co-operation between the regional and local authorities in the European Community and regional and local authorities in Romania, which can make a major contribution to the development of their relations and to the integration of Europe. The dialogue and co-operation will prepare for future work with the Committee of the Regions and for membership for the European Union; facilitate exchanging information on current issues of mutual interest, in particular on up-to-date state of play concerning EU regional policy and accession process; encourage information exchange in practical implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in all aspects of life on regional and local level; discussing any other relevant matters proposed by any side, as they can arise in the context of implementation of the Europe Agreement and in the framework of the Pre-Accession Strategy. The Association Council may also consult the proposed Joint Consultative Committee before taking decisions in areas of obvious regional interest. Consultation of committee remains, however, at the discretion of the Association Council.

4. The establishment of the proposed Joint Consultative Committee does not have any financial impact on the Community budget, the Romanian participants being responsible for their own expenses and the expenses of the Community side being covered by the budget of the Committee of the Regions.

5. The text of the proposal for a Council decision on the position to be taken by the Community in the Association Council, as provided by Article 2 (1) of the Council and Commission decision of 19.12.1994 on the conclusion of the aforementioned Europe Agreement, is attached hereto. The Council is asked to adopt this text.

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COUNCIL DECISION

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing a European Community, the Treaty establishing a European Coal and Steel Community and the Treaty establishing a European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom),

Having regard to Article 300, (2), second and third subparagraphs, of the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Having regard to Article 2 (1) of the Council and Commission Decision of 19.12.1994[1] on conclusion of the Europe Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, on the one hand, and Romania, on the other hand,

Having regard to the Commission proposal[2],

Whereas:

(1) Article 111 of the said Europe Agreement provides that the Association Council may decide to set up any special committee or body that can assist it in carrying out its duties;

(2) Dialogues and co-operation between regional and local authorities in the European Union and Romania can make a major contribution to the full implementation of the Europe Agreement;

(3) It seems appropriate that such co-operation should be between the members of the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities and of the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities.

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1 OJ L 357, 31.12.1994, p. 1

2 OJ C, , p.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

The position to be adopted by the Community within the Association Council established by Article 106 of the Europe Agreement establishing an Association between the European Communities and their Member States, on the one hand, and Romania, on the other hand, in relation to the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee shall be based on the draft decision of the said Association Council which is annexed to the present decision.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

ANNEX

DRAFT

DECISION No. .../2004 OF THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL
BETWEEN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR MEMBER STATES, OF THE ONE PART, AND ROMANIA, OF THE OTHER PART

amending, through the setting up of a Joint Consultative Committee between the Committee of the Regions and the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities., Decision No. 1/95[3] adopting the rules of procedure of the Association Council.

THE ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Having regard to the Europe Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and Romania, of the other part[4] and in particular Article 111 thereof;

Whereas dialogue and co-operation between the regional and local authorities in the European Community and those in Romania can make a major contribution to the development of their relations and to the integration of Europe;

Whereas it seems appropriate that such co-operation should be organised at the level of the Committee of the Regions of the one part, and of the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities of the other part, by setting up of a Joint Consultative Committee;

Whereas this means that the rules of procedure of the Association Council, adopted by Decision No. 1/95, need to be amended accordingly;

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The following Articles shall be added to the rules of procedure of the Association Council:

"Article 18

A Joint Consultative Committee (hereinafter referred to as "Committee") is hereby established with the task of assisting the Association Council with a view to promoting dialogue and co-operation between the regional and local authorities in the European Community and those in Romania. Such dialogue and co-operation shall be aimed in particular at:

(1) preparing Romanian local authorities for activity in the framework of future membership of the European Union;

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[3] OJ L 171, 21.07.1995, p. 41-45
[4] OJ L 357, 31.12.1994, p. 2-189

(2) preparing Romanian local authorities for their participation in the work of the Committee of the Regions after accession of Romania;

(3) exchanging information on current issues of mutual interest, in particular on the state of play concerning EU regional policy and the accession process as well as preparation of Romanian local authorities for these policies;

(4) encouraging multilateral structured dialogue between a) Romanian local authorities and b) regions from EU Member States, including through networking in specific areas where direct contacts and co-operation between local authorities from Romania, on the one hand, and regions and local authorities from EU Member States, on the other hand, might prove the most effective way of solving particular problems;

(5) providing regular exchanges of information on inter-regional co-operation between local authorities from Romania and regions and local authorities from Member States;

(6) encouraging exchanges of experience and knowledge in the field of regional policy and structural interventions, between a) Romanian local authorities and b) regions and local authorities from EU Member States, in particular know-how and techniques concerning preparation of regional and local development plans or strategies and most efficient use of Structural Funds;

(7) assisting Romanian local authorities by means of information exchange in practical implementation of the principle of subsidiarity in all aspects of life on the regional and local level;

(8) discussing any other relevant matters proposed by any side, as they can arise in the context of implementation of the Europe Agreement and in the framework of the Pre-accession Strategy.

Article 19

The Committee shall comprise of eight representatives of the Committee of the Regions, on the one hand, and eight representatives of the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities, on the other hand. An equal number of alternate members shall be appointed.

The Committee shall carry out its activities on the basis of consultation by the Association Council or, as concerns the promotion of the dialogue between the regional and local authorities, on its own initiative.

The Committee may make recommendations to the Association Council.

Members shall be chosen to ensure that the Committee is as faithful a reflection as possible of the various levels of regional and local authorities in both the European Community and Romania.

The Committee shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

The Committee shall meet at intervals, which it shall itself determine in its Rules of Procedure.

The Committee shall be co-chaired by a member of the Committee of the Regions of the European Community and a member of the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities.

Article 20

The Committee of the Regions, on the one hand, and the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities, on the other hand, shall each defray the expenses they incur by reason of their participation in the meetings of the Committee with regard to staff, travel and subsistence expenditure and to postal and telecommunications expenditure.

Expenditure in connection with interpreting at meetings, translation and reproduction of documents shall be borne by the Committee of the Regions, with the exception of expenditure in connection with interpreting or translation into or from Romanian, which shall be borne by the Romanian Liaison Committee for Cooperation with the Committee of the Regions of the European Communities.

Other expenditure relating to the material organisation of meetings shall be borne by the Party which hosts the meetings."

Article 2

This Decision shall enter into force on the first day of the second month following the date of its adoption.

Done at Brussels,

For the Association Council

The Chairman:

The Secretaries:

For the Romanian side

For the European Community