

AMENDMENT FORM

Suggestion for amendment of Article: 114 (ex 161)

By Mr Hain

Status : - Member

Without prejudice to [ex Article 162], a European law or framework law of the Council shall define the tasks, priority objectives and the organisation of the Structural Funds – which may involve grouping the Funds – the general rules applicable to them and the provisions necessary to ensure their effectiveness and the coordination of the Funds with one another and with the other existing financial instruments.

A Cohesion Fund set up by a European law of the Council shall provide a financial contribution to projects in the fields of environment and trans-European networks in the area of transport infrastructure.

In all cases, the European law or framework law of the Council shall be adopted after consulting the Committee of the Regions and the Economic and Social Committee. The Council shall act unanimously until 1 January 2007, after obtaining the consent of the Parliament.

Explanation (if any) :

We oppose co-decision for the Structural Funds. Major re-distribution of resources between Member States should be a matter for Member States, and not the Union as a whole. We favour EP consent, with a move to QMV from 2007. This was agreed after extensive negotiation at the Nice European Council. Decisions on the detailed objectives for the Structural Funds and the mix of funding between objectives substantially affect the redistribution of funding between Member States and should - like the Own Resources ceiling and Multi-Annual Financial Perspective – be made predominantly by the Council. In addition, co-decision could extend the timetable for agreeing the detail of the programmes, which in turn would delay the funding reaching beneficiaries.