

(2001/C 46 E/234)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1476/00**by Marie-Arlette Carlotti (PSE) to the Commission***(11 May 2000)*

Subject: Euro-Mediterranean Partnership revival: Euro-Med Humanities Programme

On the occasion of the debate and adoption of a resolution (Doc B5-0297/2000) on the Barcelona Process in March 2000, the European Parliament forcefully confirmed its commitment to establishing a genuine partnership between the two shores of the Mediterranean.

The emergence of such a partnership has depended crucially on efforts to strengthen understanding and exchanges between the peoples of the Mediterranean basin. That was the purpose underlying the Euro-Med Humanities Programme launched in May 1998 under the third stage of the Barcelona Process. The Euro-Med Committee, meeting on 8 May 1998, had recognised at the time that Perugia University's 'Hist-Med' and the Mediterranean Humanities Institute's 'Cultural interaction in the Mediterranean' projects could be included in the first regional operations to be launched in that connection.

But that same programme has since run into a dead end, as indeed has the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership as a whole.

What are the European Commission's proposals for reviving the Barcelona Process, in particular its third stage, to which the European Parliament remains strongly committed?

What arrangements does the European Commission expect to implement to enable the Euro-Med Humanities Programme finally to become operational? In particular:

1. Will recourse be had to Article 2.5 of the vademecum on the allocation of subsidies, which stipulates that a limited share of the budget may be used for 'spontaneous' proposals?
2. Will the Commission apply the 'pilot stage' included in the new MEDA II financial regulation to this programme?

Answer given by Mr Patten on behalf of the Commission*(7 June 2000)*

The social, cultural and human component of the Barcelona process has substantially taken shape since the Euro-Mediterranean partnership was launched in late 1995. For example, three regional programmes worth a considerable amount have been set up and are now operational: Euromed Heritage (a programme to enhance Euro-Mediterranean cultural heritage, at a cost of €17,1 million for the first phase); Euromed Audio-visual (a programme to promote Euro-Mediterranean audio-visual cooperation, costing €20 million in its first phase), and Euromed Youth (to enhance youth associations and exchanges at Euro-Mediterranean level, costing €6 million in its first phase). The Commission is also set to launch the second phase of the Euromed Heritage programme (Euromed Heritage II) in mid-2000, in the form of a call for proposals to be published in the Official Journal and on the Europa server.

As to the future Euromed Humanities programme, it has not yet been possible to launch it for internal procedural reasons, mainly regarding the need to uphold transparency and open competition. The Commission is currently examining the dossier closely in order to find a solution, if possible, at the earliest opportunity.
