



COMMISSIONE PER LE PETIZIONI
IL PRESIDENTE

Luxemburg,
Jak

109221 18.04.2000

Herrn
Günther Kreutz

Betrifft: Petition Nr. 706/99 (bei sämtlichen Schriftverkehr bitte die Petitionsnummer angeben)

Sehr geehrter Herr Kreutz,

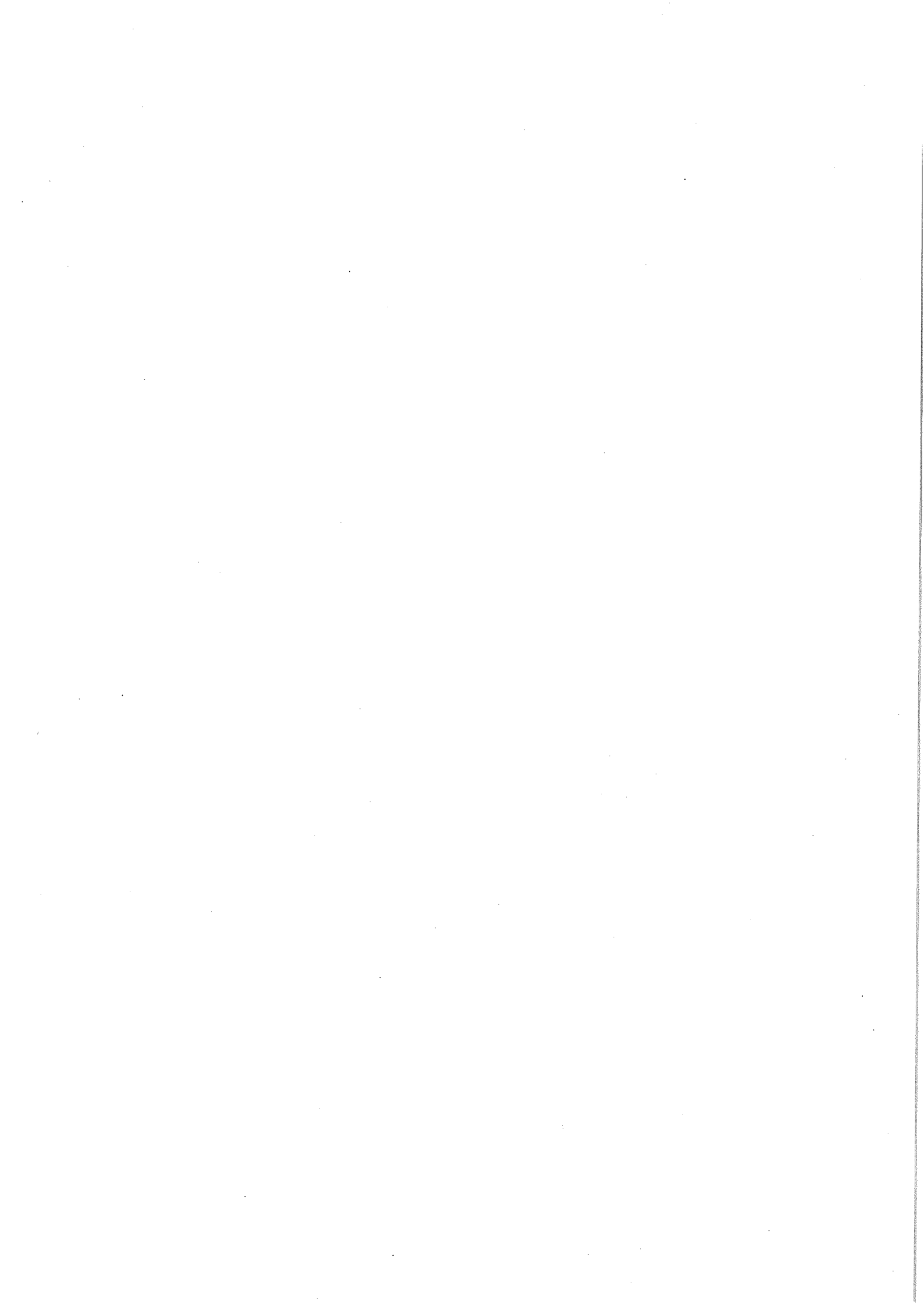
ich darf Ihnen mitteilen, daß der Petitionsausschuß Ihre Eingabe geprüft und gemäß der Geschäftsordnung des Europäischen Parlaments für zulässig erklärt hat, da die in der Petition aufgeworfenen Fragen den Tätigkeitsbereich der Europäischen Union betreffen.

Der Ausschuß hat daher mit der weiteren Prüfung Ihrer Petition begonnen und bei dieser Gelegenheit die Europäische Kommission ersucht, zu den verschiedenen Aspekten des Problems Stellung zu nehmen. Er wird die Prüfung Ihrer Petition fortsetzen, sobald ihm die erforderlichen Informationen vorliegen. Über die Weiterbehandlung Ihrer Petition werde ich Sie unterrichten.

Ihr Einverständnis voraussetzend hat der Ausschuß beschlossen, Ihre Petition in öffentlicher Sitzung zu prüfen.

Hochachtungsvoll

Nino Gemelli
Vorsitzender des Petitionsausschusses



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Notice to members

SUBJECT: Petition No 706/99, by Mr Günther Kreutz (German), on Community funding for Romanian orphanages

I. Summary of the petition :

Having learned that the European Commission has earmarked five million Euros of Community funds to aid Romanian orphanages, the petitioner requests that the funds are transferred via official bodies in Germany and Romania which could be relied upon to ensure that the funds reach those who need it most.

II. Declared admissible on 31 January 2000, the Commission was asked to provide information pursuant to Rule 175(3) of the Rules of Procedure

III. The reply from the Commission, received on 26 October 2000 reads:

The petition suggests spending Phare funds reserved for direct urgent aid for Romanian childcare institutions through a German NGO and a Romanian adoption NGO.

Since 1990, the Commission has been providing, mainly through Phare, assistance worth some 100 M€ to Romania, to address the delicate situation of children in institutions. While in the early years humanitarian assistance was predominant, programmes are now designed to address the structural situation and reform of Romania's childcare policies. Currently a 25 M€ Child Protection Programme from the Phare 1999 National Programme is being put in place in order to assist the recently established National Agency for Protecting Children's Rights in designing and implementing structural reform policies.

For the implementation of Phare programmes the Commission has to follow existing procedures. The basic rule is that management of Phare programmes is decentralised meaning that the beneficiary country's government (the Romanian government in this case) is responsible for its implementation and may conclude contracts for the supply of goods or services. Contracts are awarded following a competitive selection process by tender and are subject to ex-ante control by the Commission Delegation in Bucharest. This is what happened in the case to which the petitioner refers. In addition, considering the special nature of this project, the Romanian authorities and the Commission agreed to a special monitoring contract to guarantee correct implementation.

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The 5 M€ allocation for direct urgent assistance to childcare institutions, mentioned in the petition, was in fact a re-allocation of funds from an ongoing Phare project following a financial crisis in the child protection sector in Romania. After consultation with the Member States, the Commission decided in July 1999 to re-direct a total amount of 10 M€ from the Phare 1998 National Programme for Romania towards urgent direct assistance to childcare institutions in Romania. This emergency project was implemented as follows:

- A first tranche of 4,5 M€ was used to supply non-perishable food to 157 institutions (30.000 children), covering the needs for nine months. The contract was awarded to a procurement agent, selected on the basis of a tender. Over 3.500 tonnes of food, plus vitamins and disposable nappies, have been delivered to the institutions since November 1999. The list of priority institutions to receive help was established by the Romanian Department for Child Protection in co-operation with the Secretariat of State for the Handicapped and the Ministry of Health (which had responsibilities for specialised institutions before a single National Agency with overall responsibilities was set up). A team of inspectors checked the needs of the institutions, and the storage capacity. The inspectors also paid unannounced visits to the institutions in order to verify that the food was correctly delivered, properly stored and used.
- A second tranche of 4 M€ for repairs to infrastructures (children institutions) has been contracted to a Romanian and an Austrian NGO, which were selected after a competitive tender.

A contract for technical assistance for 1.5 M€ has been concluded in order to ensure monitoring of the delivery and use of both tranches of humanitarian aid and to recommend on legislative and institutional changes which would ensure a sound basis for further Phare support to structural reform in the sector.