


Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1996/2048(COS)	Procedure completed
Europe's maritime future: a contribution to the competitiveness of maritime industries		
Subject 3.20.03 Maritime transport: passengers and freight		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		20/05/1996
		PSE KATIFORIS Giorgos	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy		23/04/1996
		PPE ESTEVAN BOLEA María Teresa	
	RELA External Economic Relations		23/04/1996
		PPE PEX Peter	
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		25/04/1996
		NI BELLERÉ Spalato	
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Industry	1913	28/03/1996

Key events			
13/03/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0084	Summary
28/03/1996	Debate in Council	1913	
15/04/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
05/02/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
05/02/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0036/1997	
11/03/1997	Debate in Parliament		

13/03/1997	Decision by Parliament	T4-0100/1997	Summary
13/03/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/04/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1996/2048(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/4/07724

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0084	13/03/1996	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0036/1997 OJ C 085 17.03.1997, p. 0005	05/02/1997	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0100/1997 OJ C 115 14.04.1997, p. 0115-0147	13/03/1997	EP	Summary

Europe's maritime future: a contribution to the competitiveness of maritime industries

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of the Commission communication is to indicate the areas in which Union intervention would help to increase the competitiveness of Europe's maritime industries. **SUBSTANCE:** The Commission takes the view that, contrary to received ideas, the maritime industry has a promising future and a vital role to play. The maritime industries constitute a major sector in Europe: they employ over 2.5 million people and carry over 90% of external trade (and nearly 30% of internal trade). Furthermore, the encouragement given to short-distance transport and environmental concerns should contribute to an increase in maritime trade. However, the European maritime industries will not be able to consolidate their market position unless they endeavour to achieve the three objectives of competitiveness, efficiency and innovation. Efficiency in shipbuilding and transport by sea calls in particular for the use of information technologies which contain the potential for increased productivity. The Commission lists four areas which are in need of Union intervention: 1. Promotion of intangible investment: continuous effort in research and development is a key survival element in a competitive environment. The fourth research and development framework programme is being used to finance specific projects which have been specially devised for the maritime industries as part of the ESPRIT programme. Other projects are concerned with telematics, the information society (MARIS), port logistics (MARTRANS), a ship reporting system for vessels carrying dangerous or polluting goods (SAFEMAR), the creation of a fishery and ocean information network (MARSOURCE), and shipbuilding (MARVEL). The next step will be to assess the extent to which these projects genuinely help to improve the economic results achieved in the sector. Another important aspect is the coordination of research and development activities and the 'Maritime Systems of the Future' taskforce was created in 1995 to promote this development. Lastly, in the field of vocational training, the LEONARDO programme is of particular importance to the maritime industries. 2. Development of industrial cooperation: as far as cooperation with the industries of third countries (Japan, Baltic States) is concerned, industrial round tables are an important tool. In April 1996 the Commission organized a forum with European and Chinese industrialists at which matters relating to the maritime sector were discussed. Similarly, industrial cooperation with EU companies can contribute to modernization in countries with economies in transition, a process in which the EBRD can help to stimulate. Within the Union the Maritime Industries Forum constitutes a sector-specific round table. Furthermore, the Commission will be involved in Expo 1998 in Lisbon, the central theme of which will be 'The Oceans, a Heritage of the Future'; 3. Ensuring fair competition: the OECD agreement of 21 December 1994 on shipbuilding will establish a level playing-field for the main shipbuilding countries. Under the agreement, all support measures will be prohibited, except for those expressly allowed under certain circumstances: aid for research and development, social aid related to closures, export credits in accordance with the OECD arrangement, domestic credits under equivalent terms and conditions. The new regulation on aid to shipbuilding (95/3094/EEC) will replace the Seventh Directive and will give effect to, and come into force at the same time as, the OECD agreement. In addition to the implementation of the OECD agreement and the phasing-out of direct State aid to shipbuilding, the Commission is advocating the development of a new financing scheme for maritime projects in accordance with the new OECD regime and it has invited the EIB to create and support such an instrument. Lastly, in the course of its on-going negotiations with Japan, the Commission will continue to challenge trade barriers; 4. Modernizing the role of public authorities: infrastructure related to maritime transport should be given more importance in the granting of public financial assistance. In its programme to create a trans-European network the Commission therefore intends to support the improvement of port and port-related infrastructure. It is also preparing the launch of a demonstration programme for the integrated management of coastal areas. Lastly, the Commission will endeavour, within the Uruguay Round negotiations, to open up the international maritime transport markets. ?

Europe's maritime future: a contribution to the competitiveness of maritime industries

Adopting the report by Mr Giorgos KATIFORIS (PSE, EL) on a Commission communication on the future of European shipping, the committee stated that the time had come to reverse the process of decline in European maritime industries. The committee agreed with the European Commission that the European Union should have a competitive shipping industry with efficiently managed ports and shipyards with a production capacity appropriate to the requirements of the next century. Diversified action by the European Union and its Member States was needed as a matter of urgency. Even if the public sector could no longer replace the private sector in this area; it was still responsible for guidance and regulation and its main priority should be to increase the competitiveness of the sector by attacking the causes of the unprecedented decline in productivity. The main obstacles highlighted in the report were costly and unprofitable infrastructure, poor training of human resources and chaotic legislation and regulation which was difficult to apply. Apart from a number of actions which sought to remedy this situation, the Economic Affairs Committee also recommended a whole series of specific measures designed to put the industry back on its feet: better access to international markets, replacement of antiquated tankers and ships, R&D initiatives and better safety and environmental standards.?

Europe's maritime future: a contribution to the competitiveness of maritime industries

In adopting the report by Mr Giorgos KATIFORIS (PSE, GR) Parliament considered that it was time to reverse the process of decline in European maritime industries, which employ 2.5 million workers, with effectively managed ports and to provide European shipyards with a production capacity appropriate to the requirements of the next century. Shipowners should profit from the age of their equipment to renew it. To this end Parliament called on the Commission to: - establish a permanent procedure for identifying new needs and future commercial outlets and in line with that, strengthen all existing programmes and organise new research and development programmes geared towards advanced technology activities; - include in the amendments to Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the impact of certain public and private projects on the environment and provisions on the installation and dismantling of marine oil platforms; - explore the possibility of liability being shared between shipowners and oil cargo owners with regard to contributing to the costs resulting from oil spills; - consider a recommendation to the Member States on the replacement of antiquated tankers by tankers with higher safety specifications; - submit a proposal regarding the conditions and characteristics of systems of unloading of effluent from ships in ports or other maritime stations; - monitor the activities of the Member States with regard to Directive 96/39/EC on the minimum requirements for vessels carrying dangerous or polluting goods; - clarify the rules about how far Member States and local authorities could support the port infrastructures in order to guarantee fair and equal competition; - undertake a study to identify potential new sources of investment funds. ?