

Procedure file

| Basic information | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| CNS - Consultation procedure Decision | 1996/0087(CNS) | Procedure completed |
| Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000 | | |
| Subject 3.45.02 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), craft industries | | |

| Key players | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------|
| European Parliament | Committee responsible | Rapporteur | Appointed |
| | ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy | | 20/05/1996 |
| | | PPE THYSSEN Marianne | |
| | Committee for opinion | Rapporteur for opinion | Appointed |
| | BUDG Budgets | | 22/04/1996 |
| | | UPE GIANILY Jean-Antoine | |
| | ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy | | 23/04/1996 |
| | | PPE FERBER Markus | |
| | JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights | | |
| | FEMM Women's Rights | | 02/07/1996 |
| | | V VAN DIJK Nel B.M. | |
| Council of the European Union | Council configuration | Meeting | Date |
| | Environment | 1978 | 09/12/1996 |
| | Industry | 1962 | 14/11/1996 |
| | Industry | 1926 | 20/05/1996 |
| | Industry | 1913 | 28/03/1996 |

| Key events | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| 20/03/1996 | Legislative proposal published | COM(1996)0098 | Summary |
| 28/03/1996 | Debate in Council | 1913 | |
| 18/04/1996 | Committee referral announced in Parliament | | |
| 09/07/1996 | Vote in committee | | Summary |
| 09/07/1996 | Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st | A4-0249/1996 | |

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|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| | reading/single reading | | |
| 18/09/1996 | Debate in Parliament |  | |
| 19/09/1996 | Decision by Parliament | T4-0465/1996 | Summary |
| 14/11/1996 | Modified legislative proposal published | COM(1996)0591 | Summary |
| 09/12/1996 | Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament | | |
| 09/12/1996 | End of procedure in Parliament | | |
| 10/01/1997 | Final act published in Official Journal | | |

Technical information

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|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Procedure reference | 1996/0087(CNS) |
| Procedure type | CNS - Consultation procedure |
| Procedure subtype | Legislation |
| Legislative instrument | Decision |
| Legal basis | EC before Amsterdam E 130 |
| Stage reached in procedure | Procedure completed |
| Committee dossier | ECON/4/07780 |

Documentation gateway

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------|---------|
| Legislative proposal | COM(1996)0098 OJ C 156 31.05.1996, p. 0005 | 20/03/1996 | EC | Summary |
| Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading | A4-0249/1996 OJ C 277 23.09.1996, p. 0004 | 09/07/1996 | EP | |
| Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report | CES0877/1996 OJ C 295 07.10.1996, p. 0006 | 10/07/1996 | ESC | Summary |
| Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading | T4-0465/1996 OJ C 320 28.10.1996, p. 0126-0153 | 19/09/1996 | EP | Summary |
| Committee of the Regions: opinion | CDR0211/1996 OJ C 034 03.02.1997, p. 0034 | 19/09/1996 | CofR | |
| Modified legislative proposal | COM(1996)0591 OJ C 061 27.02.1997, p. 0019 | 14/11/1996 | EC | Summary |
| Follow-up document | COM(2001)0098 | 01/03/2001 | EC | Summary |

Additional information

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| European Commission | EUR-Lex |
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Final act

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Decision 1997/15 OJ L 006 10.01.1997, p. 0025 Summary |
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OBJECTIVE: The proposal for a Council decision aims to establish a third action programme for SMEs in the European Union for a period of four years (1997-2000). **SUBSTANCE:** The third multi-annual programme for SMEs has the following priority objectives: 1. To simplify and improve the administrative and regulatory business environment: - to ensure consideration of the interests of SMEs in the various Community initiatives and policies (regional policy, research, environmental protection); - to simplify and improve Community legislation (to reduce the administrative burden and the cost of adjusting to legislation); - to increase transparency and the spread of best practices on simplifying and improving the administrative and regulatory environment (transfer of businesses, retention of title); - to improve the framework for trans-national operations of SMEs (settlement procedures for trans-national disputes, promotion of appropriate legal structures); 2. To improve the financial environment for enterprises: - to improve access to loan financing; - to reduce late payment problems (regular monitoring of the Commission's 1995 recommendation); - to facilitate the development of specific financial instruments (factoring and credit insurance); - to stimulate the development of European capital markets for fast-growing SMEs (including EASDAQ); 3. To help SMEs to Europeanize and internationalize their strategies through better information services: - to improve information of SMEs, in particular through Euro Info-Centres (EICs) which the Commission wishes to transform into 'first-stop shops', directing each request to the relevant service provider; - to provide pro-active information in particular on the markets and the introduction of the single currency; - to improve the promotion of SME policy actions (information campaigns); - to promote cooperation through business search networks (improving the BC-NET and BRE); - to promote direct contacts through partnership programmes (Europartenariat and Interprise programmes); - to develop sub-contracting partnerships; - to promote access to new markets and the internationalization of SMEs (pilot projects and innovative approaches); 4. To enhance SME competitiveness and improve their access to research, innovation and training: - to increase the innovative potential of SMEs and facilitate their access to the information society; - to stimulate managerial training; - to adapt to environmental requirements; 5. Promoting of entrepreneurship and special target groups: - business culture and entrepreneurship (exchange of best practice); - craft and small enterprises; - enterprises in commerce and distributive trades; - women and young entrepreneurs; enterprises owned by minorities. In addition, the aim is to improve public information and consultation on policy to promote businesses (improve statistics, data-bases etc...). ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

In adopting a report by Marianne THYSSEN welcoming the Commission's new ECU 180m third multi-annual programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) under the consultation procedure, the economic and monetary committee is anxious to ensure that craft industries and the liberal professions also benefit and that the SME sector is helped to enjoy the benefits of the new information society. Small firms should also be encouraged to apply EU social policy provisions covering consultation between both sides of industry. The committee voted to recommend that the Commission produce an annual report on the implementation of the programme. In view of the pressure on funding, the committee decided not to call for money to be spent on studies. ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

Article 3 of the draft Council Decision contains a definition of the subsidiarity principle in the sense that it provides that the Commission shall take measures only in so far as they cannot be better achieved by the Member States. The multiannual programme now under consideration is not the only EU policy instrument to promote the establishment and development of SMEs. This policy must be at the heart of the EU's operational and legislative programmes, and in particular the internal market, the structural instruments, the Leonardo and Socrates education and training programmes, R&D and innovation, the financing instruments, particularly the EIB and the development of the information society. It is therefore important that, in addition to the third multiannual programme, other EU policies take greater account of this priority. The Committee stresses the importance of the simplification and improvement of Community legislation and the exchange of best practices and expects to see concrete results in terms of an improved business climate for SMEs in the short term. The Committee in particular emphasizes the importance of an efficient system of cost-benefit analyses. In its Opinion of 6 July 1994, the ESC looked in detail at the European Commission's Communication on the financing of SMEs. Many of the problems identified at that time still exist and need to be solved more and more urgently. The Committee has also noted with approval the Commission Communication on the development of capital markets for fast-growing small and medium-sized enterprises (EASDAQ = European Association of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotation). The Committee endorses the proposal to establish a new guarantee instrument (ELISE = European Loan Insurance Scheme for Employment) to help employment - creating SMEs to obtain loans. The Multiannual Programme also covers actions for the craft sector, commerce, the distributive trades and specific target groups such as women and young entrepreneurs. The Committee is pleased that the financial resources made available for these target groups are significantly larger than in previous years. ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

In adopting the report by Mrs Marianne THYSSEN (PPE, B), Parliament approved the Third Multiannual Programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) while calling for its extension to craft enterprises. The EP also called for measures to promote access of SMEs to the information society and to allow them full participation in the European social dialogue. It sought to stimulate the development of and access to venture capital and the starting up of SMEs through favourable tax provisions. Finally, the EP expressed the hope that the participation of employees in SMEs would be stimulated and that environment-friendly production and distribution schemes would be encouraged. ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme

The modified Commission proposal concerning a Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs (1997-2000) incorporates several amendments adopted by Parliament. The Commission believes, however, that a number of EP amendments do not relate to enterprise policy, but to other Community policies (such as social policy, fiscal policy, competition policy, economic and monetary union, and financial instruments in favour of SMEs). These amendments fit more appropriately in the context of the Commission's Integrated Programme for SMEs and have been addressed in the Commission's communication which updates and develops its Integrated Programme (COM(96)329 final). ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

OBJECTIVE : to adopt for a period of four years (1997-2000) a third action programme for SMEs in the European Union. **COMMUNITY MEASURE :** Council Decision 97/15/EC on a Third Multiannual Programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the European Union. **SUBSTANCE :** The Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs (1997-2000) has the following objectives: 1. To simplify and improve the administrative and regulatory business environment: ensuring consideration of the interests of SMEs in the various Community initiatives and policies (regional policy, research, environmental protection); simplification of legislation; transparency; spread of best practice; improvement of the framework for transnational operations of SMEs; 2. To improve the financial environment for enterprises: access to loans and risk capital; reducing late payment problems; development of specific financial instruments; stimulating the development of capital markets for fast-growing SMEs; 3. To help SMEs to internationalize their strategies through better information and cooperation networks: access by SMEs to the information society; Euro-Info Centres; business search networks; partnership programmes; subcontracting partnerships; access to new markets and internationalization of SMEs; 4. To enhance SME competitiveness and improve access to research, innovation and training: increasing the innovative potential of SMEs; managerial training; adaptation to environmental requirements; 5. To promote entrepreneurship and support special target groups: business culture and entrepreneurship; craft and small enterprises; enterprises in commerce and distributive trades; women; young entrepreneurs; enterprises owned by minorities; 6. Policy development and improvement of knowledge about SMEs. The financial reference for implementation of the programme totals ECU 127 million for the whole of the period. **DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE :** from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 2000. ?

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

This report on the activities of the European Union for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is drawn up in accordance with the Council Decision on the Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs. This Decision provides for the Commission to submit to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions a two-yearly report on the progress achieved in taking SMEs into account in all Community policies and programmes, following its coordination action. This is the fifth report of this type. It reports on the latest developments that have occurred since the adoption of the previous report at the end of 1997 and outlines future prospects. The report is broken down into three main chapters: the first one deals with improving the framework conditions for SMEs, the second one with programmes and instruments with a particular financial impact on support for SMEs and the third with enlargement, pre-accession and cooperation with non-member countries. The conclusion describes the development of the process of increasingly taking SMEs into account in Community policies and programmes. In its conclusions, the report shows that the priority policy in favour of SMEs and the development of an entrepreneurial Europe confirms. It should also be noted that the taking into account of the participation of the Community programmes has increased in the past years. There remains however, to efforts to be made on the issue so of the evaluation of the impact of policy on the development of SMEs. If the Community contribution to the development of essentials in order to maximise the potential of competition, growth, innovation and the work of the SME. The report clearly shows that during the implementation of the Third Multiannual programme for the SMEs, enterprise policy, in particular in the support of the SME, has become an integral part of the the broad policy lines of the Union. A positive evolution similar to this is also observed in the Member States. This report describes the aims of the Integrated Programme for SMEs, the framework for coordinating the various EU initiatives in support of SMEs taken under enterprise policy or other Community policies or under the Concerted Actions. It demonstrates that the SME dimension is now an integral part of Community policies and has an impact on them. It also shows that SMEs are a priority in many programmes and that soem of them provide for special SME measures. The developments since the end of 1997 show that SMEs are at the centre of the European policy-making. The conclusions of this report also show that SME participation in Community programmes is improving in general. ?