


Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1996/2127(COS)
Procedure completed	
European Automobile Industry: progress in the structural adjustment of the industry. Report	
Subject 3.40.03 Motor industry, cycle and motorcycle, commercial and agricultural vehicles	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	PSE DONNELLY Alan John	09/10/1996
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	TRAN Transport and Tourism		01/10/1996
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Industry	1962	14/11/1996

Key events			
10/07/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0327	Summary
20/09/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
14/11/1996	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
17/02/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
17/02/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0052/1997	
11/03/1997	Debate in Parliament		
13/03/1997	Decision by Parliament	T4-0098/1997	Summary
13/03/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/04/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1996/2127(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/4/08073

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0327	10/07/1996	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0052/1997 OJ C 115 14.04.1997, p. 0003	17/02/1997	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0098/1997 OJ C 115 14.04.1997, p. 0115-0140	13/03/1997	EP	Summary

European Automobile Industry: progress in the structural adjustment of the industry. Report

OBJECTIVE: On the basis of the Commission's most recent communication on the automobile industry of February 1994, the Council adopted a resolution on the automobile industry in May 1994 in which it called on the Commission to report on the industry's structural adjustment and on the progress achieved in implementing the said resolution. This communication is designed to respond to the Council's request.

SUBSTANCE: The Commission document lists the major measures taken since the adoption of the Council resolution and defines the elements of the future strategy. Among the achievements and measures under way it refers in particular to the following: - the Task Force 'The Car of Tomorrow' has started to operate; - the block exemption regulation for the distribution of motor vehicles has been revised; - industrial cooperation has been established with China and India; - the Korean and Japanese markets have been opened further to European imports; - contacts between European suppliers and Japanese manufactures have been enhanced; - the necessary regulatory work for the EC Type-Approval, becoming mandatory for new types of passenger cars in 1996, has been completed; - the results of the Auto-Oil Programme, which is based on air-quality targets for major European cities and a detailed cost-benefit assessment, have been released; - new safety and environmental initiatives have been taken (front and side impact crash protection, safety belts in buses and coaches, etc.) are under way; - a training network has been set up with funding from the FORCE Programme, resulting in 53 concrete and innovative training project proposals, and the continuation of networking under the LEONARDO Programme has been confirmed. The Commission takes the view nevertheless, that further joint industry-governmental efforts need to be undertaken to facilitate a further improvement in the industry's competitiveness, which it regards as one of the bedrocks on which the European economy is built. What is mainly involved is the promotion of non-material investment, in particular in R&D and training, to ensure effective competition, to develop industrial cooperation and to modernize the role of the public authorities. Furthermore, the Commission will continue to work to improve the framework conditions for the European automotive industry, utilizing cost-benefit assessment techniques to take environmental and social constraints into account in new regulatory policy. It supports the establishment of a high-level group to advise the Commission on questions concerning the automotive sector and provides for the early creation of a second high-level panel comprising senior representatives from the Commission, the automobile and component industries as well as from power-generating utilities and public authorities to advise the Commission on research priorities and strategies. ?

European Automobile Industry: progress in the structural adjustment of the industry. Report

The Committee on Economic Affairs unanimously adopted the proposal for a resolution on the Commission's communication on the automobile industry in 1996. Recalling the main points raised in 1995 in Parliament's opinion on the 1994 communication, with regard to which the Commission had not announced any new major political initiatives in 1996, the rapporteur, Mr Donnelly (PPE, UK), set out a number of inevitable priorities for the future of the European automobile industry, which faced the dual challenge of raising manufacturing quality and consumer reliability to a high standard and modernizing its structure to ensure greater competitiveness on the market. He therefore deplored the lack of resources and limited staff of the Commission's Task Force on "the car of tomorrow" and recommended that its minor role be upgraded to a strategic function by incorporating this body into the "strategic actions" under the fifth research and development framework programme. In addition, Mr Donnelly retabled the idea of setting up a special high-level panel made up of representatives of the manufacturing industries, trades union and user groups and granting it a consultative remit. With regard to global agreements with trans-Atlantic competitors, the rapporteur considered that it would be advisable to achieve more consistent regulation of vehicles through bilateral contacts with the United States, especially as regards environmental and safety standards, and for the European Union to adhere to the 1958 United Nations agreement on motor vehicles and for the European Parliament to exercise its powers and be informed before any decision was taken or move made within the Council or the committees set up under Article 113 of the EC Treaty when the agreement was revised or when any other initiative was taken at international level to harmonize vehicle safety and environmental standards. Finally, Mr Donnelly pointed out the urgent need for a public information campaign to warn parents of the dangers of using child restraint systems in the front seats of vehicles equipped with air bags in order to ensure that the tragic experiences in America were not repeated.?

European Automobile Industry: progress in the structural adjustment of the industry. Report

In adopting the report by Mr Alan John DONNELLY (PSE, UK) on the European automobile industry Parliament stressed the link between competitiveness, productivity and employment. It called on the Commission to: 1) develop a specific strategy for the European automobile industry, in particular by: - giving the task force on the car of tomorrow a strategic function enabling it to tackle issues of industrial competitiveness as well as environmental technologies and ensuring that it fully explores emission control technologies; - establishing a high level panel made up of representatives of the automobile and component industries, trades unions and user groups which could advise the Commission on overall strategy for the automobile sector and assist in the upcoming review of the implementation of the block exemption on car distribution and servicing agreements; - proposing a clear and comprehensive political framework in order to foster the market-spread of clean cars. 2) encourage efforts to harmonise vehicle safety and environmental standards at levels consistent with Article 100a of the EC Treaty; 3) encourage investment and strong competition throughout international automobile markets: - by continuing to apply the June 1995 agreement on automobiles with Japan; - by improving market access for third countries (in particular South-East Asia, Latin America and South Korea); - by supporting the modernisation and restructuring of industries in the countries of Eastern Europe. 4) support investment in education and training within the automobile and components industries and to make use of the Adapt, Socrates and Leonardo programmes. Parliament also called for the establishment of measures to monitor intra-Community relocations. Parliament considered that priority should be given to the following research areas: emissions and fuel consumption; motor electronics; improvements to safety, including for vehicle occupants, pedestrians and cyclists; electric vehicles; light-weight structures and materials; production techniques and recycling of old vehicles. Lastly, Parliament pointed to the urgent need for a major public information campaign to warn parents of the dangers of using child-restraint systems in the front seats of cars equipped with passenger side airbags. ?