






Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1998/2017(COS)	Procedure completed
Fight against drugs, international cooperation: Union's platform for the UN special session June 1998, UNGASS		
Subject 7.30.30.04 Action to combat drugs and drug-trafficking		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs	PSE D'ANCONA Hedy	03/12/1996
	Former committee responsible		
	 Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs		03/12/1996
		PSE D'ANCONA Hedy	
	Former committee for opinion		
	 Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	2104	08/06/1998
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2099	28/05/1998
	General Affairs	2057	08/12/1997
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2055	04/12/1997

Key events			
03/11/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
04/12/1997	Debate in Council	2055	
08/12/1997	Debate in Council	2057	
08/01/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1997)0670	Summary
15/01/1998	Debate in Parliament		
15/01/1998	Decision by Parliament	A4-0359/1997	
15/01/1998	Report referred back to committee		
20/02/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		

25/05/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
25/05/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0211/1998	
28/05/1998	Debate in Council	2099	
05/10/1998	Debate in Parliament		
06/10/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0545/1998	Summary
06/10/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
26/10/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1998/2017(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	LIBE/4/09680; LIBE/4/09683

Documentation gateway

Motion for a resolution	B4-1238/1996	22/10/1996	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0359/1997 OJ C 388 22.12.1997, p. 0002	03/11/1997	EP	
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1997)0670	08/01/1998	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0211/1998 OJ C 226 20.07.1998, p. 0003	25/05/1998	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0545/1998 OJ C 328 26.10.1998, p. 0016-0043	06/10/1998	EP	Summary

Fight against drugs, international cooperation: Union's platform for the UN special session June 1998, UNGASS

The Committee adopted the report of its chairwoman, Hedy d'ANCONA (PES, NL), on harmonisation of the Member States' drug laws, by 17 votes to 11, with 4 abstentions, the votes on many of the amendments being extremely close. The report, drawn up at Parliament's initiative, contains a recommendation to the Council. As Mrs d'ANCONA emphasised, the aim is not to harmonise the fine detail of the Member States' regulations on drugs but to grant national, regional and local authorities the freedom to carry out their own policies. She said that legislation must be taken account of the realities, as indicated in an amendment tabled by Sir Jack STEWART-CLARK which was accepted by the committee. In practice, it was impossible to imprison every drug addict and in any case prison did not solve the problem of drug addiction. The committee's recommendation calls for the right to receive appropriate medical treatment to apply to drug addicts. It says that Article 129 of the EC Treaty (as amended at Amsterdam), which is the legal basis for EU public health policy, should be taken to mean that support may be given to treatment programmes under which hard drugs are supplied on medical prescription and subject to the necessary checks. The EU institutions will have greater freedom of manoeuvre after the new treaty has entered into force. The recommendation also argues that repression should concentrate on illegal drug trafficking, while penalties for those who are simply users of illegal drugs should be abolished. The committee believes that the UN drug conventions of 1961, 1971 and 1988 have led to policies in the Member States which need to be looked at carefully. It urges the Council to call, at the UN General Assembly on Drugs to be held next June, for these conventions to be reviewed, the consumption of illegal drugs decriminalised, the trade in cannabis and its derivatives regulated and methadone and heroin allowed under medical prescription. In addition, the recommendation urges the Council to make more funds available to help reduce demand for drugs and also fund information and education measures, a harm-reduction policy and improvements to health and care facilities for drug addicts. The committee calls on Member States to cooperate to a greater degree over drug-related matters at national, regional and local levels and for the powers of local and regional authorities to be extended in accordance with the Community action programme on the prevention of drug dependence (1996-2000). Lastly, it stresses the importance of pilot projects in urban areas aimed at reducing demand and preventing crime, as well as the value of involving local communities in developing countries. ?

Fight against drugs, international cooperation: Union's platform for the UN special session June 1998, UNGASS

OBJECTIVE: establishing the position of the European Union for the special session of the UN General Assembly on International Cooperation on the Fight Against Drugs (UNGASS). **SUBSTANCE:** the aim of the communication is, in consultation with and between the Member States, to help prepare the EU position for the special session of the UNGASS to be held on 8-10 June 1998. following the international conferences on sustainable development centred on mankind (Rio, Vienna, Cairo, Beijing and Copenhagen). The communication commences with a number of general observations outlining the international situation with regard to the use of drugs, indicating that the economic costs of drug abuse in OECD countries, including expenditure on law enforcement and prevention programmes currently amount to about \$120 billion per year, while the estimated drug profits are between \$300 and \$500 billion (approximately equal to the total GNP of the African continent). The situation has not become any better since 1990 when the United Nations formally decided to address the issue. The production and consumption of drugs have steadily increased. Furthermore, the old between producing trafficking distinction is becoming blurred and improved communications are making deliveries and financial transactions easier and cheaper than ever. Responsibility itself will be shared at international level for taking the necessary measures. The Union alone cannot hope to respond effectively to the human and financial problems created by drugs trafficking. Its objective is therefore to propose a 'realistic' strategy for the UNGASS based on three major objectives. 1) consolidation and practical implementation of the principle of co-responsibility between producers, consumers and traffickers. 2) ensuring that throughout UN member countries efforts are focused on measures to combat drug trafficking, which should be a key area of policy making. 3) achievement of policy advances on areas in which the Union has already reached a degree of consensus. For this purpose, the Union wishes to achieve an agreement within the UN concerning a reduction in demand ('guiding principles of drug demand reduction'). In the Commission's view, such a declaration would be a major innovation compared with other UN conventions in this area. Progress must also be made in combating the new threats posed by synthetic drugs, money laundering (in particular 'safe havens'), control of chemical precursors, etc. In addition to this joint position, the communication sets out the Union's specific priorities in this field, centring on demand reduction, (the Union's top priority, spearheading its entire strategy), synthetic drugs, alternative development, its move from production system (based on illicit cultivation towards a licit one, money laundering and judicial cooperation. ?

Fight against drugs, international cooperation: Union's platform for the UN special session June 1998, UNGASS

The committee adopted by 21 votes to 9 the report by its chairman, Mrs Hedy d'ANCONA (PSE, NL) on international cooperation to combat drugs. The report was adopted by a large majority after detailed debate and the attainment of compromises on the most sensitive issues. Opponents voted against the report for a variety of reasons, some regarding it as too permissive, others as insufficiently liberal. Drugs policies must be based on the fundamental idea that drug addiction is not only the consequence of individual choices but is also fomented by social conditions which lead to the marginalisation of certain groups in society. The report states that it is necessary, therefore, to link the fight against poverty, unemployment and social injustice to the problems of both drug addiction and the production of illegal drugs. The report stresses social aspects and advocates greater cooperation and exchanges of experience and information, at national, regional and urban level - particularly regarding social and health issues. The report recalls the objective of a drug-free society, but considers that the harm reduction policies pursued successfully, in some cases for more than ten years, at urban and regional level should be taken into account in drafting new drugs legislation. The report, which was originally intended for adoption before the United Nations session of June 1998, will in fact be adopted in plenary after that session. It deals with issues which are politically extremely sensitive, and was delayed on account of being referred back to the committee in plenary in November 1997. ?

Fight against drugs, international cooperation: Union's platform for the UN special session June 1998, UNGASS

In adopting the report by Mrs Hedy d'ANCONA (PSE, NL), the European Parliament made a series of recommendations to the Council in connection with the extraordinary session of the UN General Assembly on Drugs (UNGASS). Parliament firstly recognised that drug policies should be based on the idea that drug addiction was not only the consequence of individual choices but was also fomented by social conditions. It was necessary, therefore, to link the fight against poverty, unemployment and social injustice to the problems of both drug addiction and the production of illegal drugs. The campaign against drugs must not be reduced to a simple matter of granting funds, and the fight against drugs could not be conducted only at police and judiciary level. Parliament called for new programmes to be introduced before 2003 with the aim of reducing demand for drugs and preventing money laundering. It called for priority to be assigned to the policy issue of new synthetic drugs and for the threat of organised crime with regard to drug trafficking to be addressed. It called on the Council to base European drugs policy, at national and international level, on stepping up and improving cooperation between States, regions and towns. For their part, States should assign priority to policies to reduce both demand and health risks. Member States should also develop cooperation with regard to research into the biological, medical and socioeconomic impact of drug addiction and its effects on human health and life expectancy. It called on Member States to recognise the discrepancy between legislation on dangerous drug consumption and practical compliance with such legislation. Accordingly, it called for research into the extent to which these differences were compatible with respect for the international conventions on drugs which they had ratified. Parliament called on them to recognise the value of a balance between an idealised conception of a drug-free society and the positive impact of a pragmatic attitude. Parliament considered that national, urban and regional projects on the diminution of health risks, the reduction of demand for drugs and rehabilitation of drug addicts should be analysed to find out whether they could provide new methods to curb the problems involving drugs. As regards developing countries, it called for local communities to participate in planning initiatives for the reduction of drug consumption. Parliament called on the Member States to ensure that the right to adequate medical treatment, nursing, care and relevant rehabilitation also applied without exception to those dependent on drugs. These measures, which should be taken by health and nursing and social services working in cooperation with each other, should be controlled by persons with medical competence and aim to make the addict free of any dependence. Parliament urged the Council to make more funds available for the prevention and control of the demand for drugs as well as to control supply and for information and education

addressed particularly to young people, families and the groups most affected by the problem of drug dependence. It called for a harm-reduction policy to be adopted in each Member State, as well as policies for the improvement of health and support for therapeutic communities for those dependent on drugs. Parliament called for more funds to be made available for detoxification, rehabilitation and other healthcare facilities for those dependent on drugs, with the aim of a drug-free life. It called on Member States to adopt a common methodology and indicators relating to drug supply and demand. It stressed the importance of making money laundering a criminal offence, since the more penalties there were, the easier it would be to trace money derived from criminal sources and to establish the necessary international cooperation. The Union should coordinate its anti-drugs activities more effectively with those of the relevant UN bodies. Parliament called for the European monitoring centre for drugs and drug abuse (EMCDDA) to step up its research in the field of the control and reduction of the supply of drugs. The REITOX network should be extended to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Cyprus.?