

Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1998/2061(COS)
Procedure completed	
Economic relations EU/USA: the new transatlantic marketplace NTM	
Subject 6.40.11 Relations with industrialised countries	
Geographical area United States	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RELA External Economic Relations		23/04/1998
		PSE MANN Erika	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy		13/03/1998
		PPE CUSHNAHAN John Walls	
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		13/07/1998
		PPE PEIJS Karla M.H.	
	JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		22/07/1998
		ELDR DE CLERCQ Willy C.E.H.	
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		03/09/1998
		PSE COLLINS Kenneth D.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	2129	09/11/1998
	General Affairs	2078	30/03/1998

Key events			
11/03/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1998)0125	Summary
30/03/1998	Debate in Council	2078	
27/05/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/10/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
27/10/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0387/1998	

17/11/1998	Debate in Parliament		
18/11/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0668/1998	Summary
18/11/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/12/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1998/2061(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	RELA/4/09894

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1998)0125	11/03/1998	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A4-0387/1998 OJ C 359 23.11.1998, p. 0005	27/10/1998	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T4-0668/1998 OJ C 379 07.12.1998, p. 0061-0094	18/11/1998	EP	Summary

Economic relations EU/USA: the new transatlantic marketplace NTM

OBJECTIVE: presentation of a new strategy to achieve partnership between the European Union and the United States or a new transatlantic marketplace based on the elimination of technical obstacles to trade. **SUBSTANCE:** the Commission communication seeks to show that further possibilities exist for developing the partnership between the United States and Europe over and above those contained in the new transatlantic agenda of 1995 (COS0304). Major problems still exist in the form of barriers to trade and investment, especially with regard to regulations and standards. In the Commission's view, these non-tariff barriers constitute a major obstacle to the development of trade between those concerned and are a source of constant friction over and above traditional trade disputes. For this reason, the Commission proposes a further set of measures to facilitate trade in goods and services between the European Union and the United States in the form of a New Transatlantic Marketplace (NTM) which would make it possible to prevent numerous bilateral conflicts which are harmful to both sides in both economic and political terms while ensuring a high level of environmental and public health protection as already achieved in Europe. The NTM which takes the form of a single overall agreement should meet the following requirements: - it should address the real barriers to EU/US trade and investment; - it should bring economic benefit to the EU and the US commensurate with the effort involved; - it should not damage European objectives in the future multinational negotiations within the WTO; - it should not lead to the creation of new trade obstacles to third countries or reduce their access to US markets; - it should capture political interest but be technically achievable; - it should be consistent with and should not jeopardize the agreed multilateral rules of the WTO and other international fora (OECD, WIPO etc.); - it should enhance the political relationship between the parties concerned; - it should benefit consumers and preserve a high level of protection of public health and consumer safety, - it should not impede the further development of the Community acquis. In addition, any proposal in this area should serve to stimulate further multilateral liberalization both through the adoption of approved bilateral liberalization measures and a firmer set of rules which could subsequently be extended to other partners. the NTM should also focus on bilateral obstacles which cannot be resolved within a multilateral framework. The NTM has four major objectives 1. A widespread removal of technical barriers to trade in goods through an extensive process of mutual recognition and/or harmonization, promoting both consumer and business interests. 2. A political commitment to eliminate by 2010 all industrial tariffs on a most-favoured-nation basis provided that a critical mass of other trading partners do the same. 3. A free trade area in services bearing in mind the criteria and requirements established by the Council. 4. Liberalization beyond multilateral or plurilateral agreements in areas of government procurement, intellectual property and investment. Bilateral cooperation should also be sought in areas such as trade facilitation, customs procedure simplification, SME partnerships and sustainable development and the environment.?

Economic relations EU/USA: the new transatlantic marketplace NTM

The Committee adopted a report by Erica MANN (PES, D) by 16 votes to 2 on a Commission paper on the New Transatlantic Marketplace. The Commission document looks at two aspects of the issue. It proposes starting negotiations on technical obstacles to trade in goods, services, public procurement contracts and intellectual property, with a view to concluding formal agreements in these areas. In addition, it proposes close cooperation on multilateral negotiations (e.g. within the WTO) through regular bilateral dialogue. The Committee believes that

transatlantic relations should cover economic and trade links as well as security and defence. MEPs welcomed the proposal to create a transatlantic economic partnership and argued that parliamentary bodies should be involved in the process. On the subject of trade negotiations, the committee emphasised the importance of achieving results in the area of technical obstacles to trade, in particular through new mutual recognition agreements. Any agreement of this kind, it said, should conform to the EU's existing high standards on consumer protection, human, animal and plant health, safety and the environment. As regards cooperation measures, the committee believes that the EU and the US should cooperate closely within multilateral organisations and especially the WTO with a view to the 1999 ministerial conference. It particularly welcomed the proposal to institute a regular, structured dialogue at the level of ministers and officials. It was in favour of multilateral measures led by the Union and the USA in conjunction with the social partners for the promotion of basic internationally recognised labour standards. In conclusion, the committee called on the Commission to keep Parliament fully informed about its recommendations for a negotiating mandate, if necessary in confidence.

Economic relations EU/USA: the new transatlantic marketplace NTM

In adopting the report by Mrs Erika MANN (PSE, D), the European Parliament delivered its opinion on the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP), replacing the New Transatlantic Marketplace (NTM), which Member States had rejected. The European Parliament: -welcomed the proposal for the creation of a Transatlantic Economic Partnership, although calling for the relevant Parliamentary bodies to participate and stressing the importance not only of trade but also of economic and defence relations and calling for periodic review of the TEP; -strongly condemned the United States' approach of threatening the EU with a range of unilateral sanctions in retaliation against the altered banana regime; -stressed that any US complaints ought instead to be addressed to the WTO disputes body, since otherwise the multilateral trade system and the new TEP were liable to be called into question again; -called specifically for the action plan envisaged under the new Transatlantic Economic Partnership to be suspended until the threat of sanctions against Community products was withdrawn. Parliament also stressed the following points: 1) formal trade negotiations: Parliament regretted that, because of the piecemeal approach chosen by the Commission, Parliament would be unable to bring any direct influence to bear on the substance of a number of sectoral agreements. With regard to combating technical barriers to trade in goods, it was adamant that any mutual recognition agreement (MRA) must be consistent with the EU's high standards. WTO and TEP negotiations must not affect the *acquis communautaire*, particularly services of general interest which maintained the economic and social cohesion of the EU. It called for adequate consultation of the industries and professional federations concerned and participation by itself (not only consultations between the Commission and the Council's '113 Committee'). A 'framework agreement' on MRAs would constitute an act of significant importance. Bilateral liberalisation of services should strictly comply with the respective rules. Similarly, negotiations on public contracts and intellectual property must be closely monitored. Parliament stressed that the new Partnership must not call into question the social legislation in force in the Member States; 2) cooperative actions: Parliament took the view that, while seeking common approaches with the United States, particularly as regards the settlement of disputes, the EU should adopt an independent position in fresh WTO negotiations and should demand the establishment of relations between the ILO and WTO. Parliament also stressed the fundamental role of cooperation in tackling the current financial crisis and endorsed the proposal that an early warning system should be established in the field of food safety; 3) with regard to the functioning of the action plan: Parliament was concerned about the dominant role assigned to committees of experts, and insisted that the parliamentary dimension of cooperation be taken into account: a joint parliamentary committee of the European Parliament and the US Congress should be involved in the implementation of the TEP. Parliament also called for more frequent ministerial meetings and the institution of specific working groups. Parliament considered that economic relations with the USA should be based on the principle of sustainable development, taking due account, therefore, of the environmental dimension. On the other hand, Parliament considered it unacceptable that it was not informed and consulted before the Council took a decision. It therefore called for the conclusion of an interinstitutional agreement to ensure that it was more fully informed about the negotiation and conclusion of external agreements and could participate more actively therein.?