


# Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) <a href="#">2000/2016(COS)</a>	Procedure completed
Humanitarian aid: assessment and future of Community activities (Regulation (EC) No 1257/96)	
Subject 6.50 Emergency, food, humanitarian aid, aid to refugees, Emergency Aid Reserve	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>DEVE</b> Development and Cooperation		23/02/2000
		PSE <a href="#">IMBENI Renzo</a>	
Council of the European Union	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	<b>AFET</b> Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		25/01/2000
	<b>CONT</b> Budgetary Control	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
European Commission	Commission DG <a href="#">European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)</a>	Commissioner	

Key events			
26/10/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0468	Summary
21/01/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/06/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
27/06/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A5-0191/2000</a>	
04/09/2000	Debate in Parliament		
05/09/2000	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T5-0354/2000</a>	Summary
05/09/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/05/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2000/2016(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 050; Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	DEVE/5/12194

### Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0468	26/10/1999	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	<a href="#">A5-0191/2000</a> <a href="#">OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0010</a>	27/06/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	<a href="#">T5-0354/2000</a> <a href="#">OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0035-0072</a>	05/09/2000	EP	Summary

## Humanitarian aid: assessment and future of Community activities (Regulation (EC) No 1257/96)

**PURPOSE :** To present a report on Community humanitarian activities **CONTENT :** This report is submitted in accordance with the requirements of Article 20 of Regulation 1257/96/EC. Outside consultants were appointed to carry out two evaluations, and in broad terms, the Commission agrees with the findings. This Communication is not a substitute for the reports but rather a reading of their principal conclusions correlated with other sources. The report discusses the main factors behind ECHO's way of working which have been identified as the root of the problems experienced. The Commission comments on these findings and has produced an action plan to address the issues. The reports highlight problems at both managerial and strategic level. In response the Communication discusses a framework for both the policy direction and the management of Community humanitarian activities in the future, in terms of a performance contract between ECHO and its main stakeholders - With regard to stakeholders, the Commission will study the possible introduction of requirements to monitor the attitudes of direct beneficiaries or at least include this aspect in ex-post evaluations. It also intends to establish best practice benchmarks and overall performance targets and report to the Humanitarian Aid Committee on the targets. This latter will continue to be a key forum for policy co-ordination with Member States in the field of humanitarian aid. - ECHO provides assistance exclusively through partners. The Commission will discuss with partners additional ways to improve the joint work, and offer key multilateral agencies such as the UN and Red Cross programmed support for activities of mutual interest. It will reinforce its strategy of assisting the NGO community to build capacity through the recently introduced Grant Facility for Studies, Training and Networks. - The Commission lays out plans for a strategic management plan, with mission statement, clearly defined objectives for all Global Plans, together with measurable indicators. It will document best practice in all major humanitarian donors. It will carry out a review of the Framework Partnership Agreement, and specify the policy applying to funding decisions. Staff will undergo obligatory courses on financial management and project management if they are involved in management contracts. - A longer-term strategy review will take place on intervention in crisis situations. This will include conflict prevention/early warning, disaster preparedness, and operational emergency response. There is also a discussion as to whether the Regulation should be modified.?

## Humanitarian aid: assessment and future of Community activities (Regulation (EC) No 1257/96)

The committee adopted the report by Renzo IMBENI (PES, I) on the Commission communication assessing Community humanitarian activities. The committee pointed out that the EU was now the world's biggest aid donor. The EU's humanitarian aid, as supplied by the EC Humanitarian Office (ECHO), was one of its strengths but the report said that the Commission must come up with a clear strategy to define and step up ECHO's role, with a better PR strategy to show the public what it does. The committee believed that, despite its bad press, ECHO had performed well since it was set up in 1992. It should be given a clear mandate and the necessary staffing and finance to expand its role to fill the gap in post-emergency ('grey zone') situations, where there are pressing needs after initial relief operations stop but before development projects start. At the same time, the committee demanded reforms to increase coordination with other Commission departments, implement quality control on the basis of clear targets and the monitoring of results, provide training programmes for staff and decentralise responsibility to staff out in the field. The committee also wanted disaster preparedness to be integrated into all European development and technical cooperation programmes and called for human rights, with emphasis on the rights of women and children, to be incorporated into the conception and implementation of humanitarian aid, without imposing conditionality. ?

## Humanitarian aid: assessment and future of Community activities (Regulation (EC) No 1257/96)

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on an assessment and future of Community humanitarian activities. In adopting its resolution, the European Parliament called on the Commission to overcome confusion and uncertainty by unambiguously opting for a strategy for the future of stepping up the humanitarian aid policy entrusted to ECHO. Furthermore, it asked the Commission to submit to it and the Council, a clear strategy on the role that the humanitarian aid supplied by ECHO should play within external and development policies. In adopting the resolution, the European Parliament addressed the following requests to the Commission: - an increase in the administrative and financial capacities necessary for carrying out

reorganisation and rehabilitation tasks in post-emergency situations; - the creation of a system for overall coordination of all the donors involved in humanitarian aid at the international level; - that the Commission and the Council give ECHO the function of a coordinating platform for all the Member States' emergency aid services at times of major natural disasters or other serious crises; - that disaster preparedness be integrated into all European development and technical cooperation programmes; - that the Commission take certain steps with regard to the management of ECHO; - that preference should be given to the NGO system and associations of civil society when partners are chosen to carry out humanitarian tasks; - that ECHO maintain a flexible approach; - that the Commission take the appropriate steps to put a stop to the increased politicisation of humanitarian assistance; - that ECHO's strategy for communicating with the outside be strengthened; - that the Commission and the Member States back the efforts made to ensure that the European Union's presence and influence in international organisations are more representative of its political strength and the extent of its contribution to humanitarian aid.?