


# Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1999/2163(COS)	Procedure completed
European year of lifelong learning, 1996 (dec. 2493/95/EC). Report		
Subject 4.40.01 European area for education, training and lifelong learning 4.40.15 Vocational education and training		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	<b>CULT</b> Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport		20/10/1999
		PPE-DE <a href="#">GUTIÉRREZ-CORTINES</a> <a href="#">Cristina</a>	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
Council of the European Union	<b>EMPL</b> Employment and Social Affairs		22/11/1999
		V/ALE <a href="#">EVANS Jill</a>	

Key events			
15/09/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0447	Summary
25/10/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
13/07/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
13/07/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A5-0200/2000</a>	
08/09/2000	Debate in Parliament		
08/09/2000	Decision by Parliament	<a href="#">T5-0389/2000</a>	Summary
08/09/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/05/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1999/2163(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	CULT/5/12088

## Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(1999)0447	15/09/1999	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A5-0200/2000</a> <a href="#">OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0011</a>	13/07/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		<a href="#">T5-0389/2000</a> <a href="#">OJ C 135 07.05.2001, p. 0299-0304</a>	08/09/2000	EP	Summary

## European year of lifelong learning, 1996 (dec. 2493/95/EC). Report

PURPOSE : to present a report on the implementation of the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996). CONTENT : this report, which is being submitted in accordance with Article 8 of European Parliament and Council Decision 2493/95/EC on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996) (see procedure COD/1994/0199), seeks to provide an overall assessment of the European Year and to draw some lessons of relevance for future Community activities in the field. From this report, it would appear that the concept of lifelong learning gained acceptance in public opinion and political discussion indicating that the European year was a timely initiative which has helped to change society and attitudes fundamentally, and that it can be claimed to have been one of the more successful initiatives of this type. The European Year set out to promote lifelong learning by acting on both the demand and supply sides : - on the one hand, raising awareness among the general public of the need and the desirability of continuing to learn; - on the other hand, stimulating debate on how delivery systems can cater for new learning needs. The Commission attached great importance to implementing it on a decentralised basis and in close partnership with the bodies designated by the participating countries. Carrying on the operation simultaneously throughout the European economic area gave it added weight, facilitated transnational communication of ideas and exchange of good practice and strengthened the voice of advocates of a lifelong approach to learning in the ongoing education debate in the participating States. The situation encountered in the different States varies considerably as regards both the pre-existing level of penetration of the idea of lifelong learning in general consciousness and the availability of lifelong learning opportunities. Nevertheless, whether it was in areas where the concept was scarcely known or in areas with well- established traditions of lifelong learning, the response encountered was one of enthusiasm, and, above all, one of motivation to improve on the status quo. The budget of 8.34 million Ecus co-financed some 550 projects (representing 5 000 events) at Community, national, regional or local level, to a total value of 34 million Ecus. Press coverage is estimated to have been some 4 000 articles, and there were 80 000 visits to the internet site. Irrespective of the level of funding, the precise impact of the Year cannot really be scientifically measured; however, there is plenty of evidence to support the claim that the initiative has improved the situation in Member States and achieved lasting results. Many new initiatives launched during 1996 or since then in the Member States - in addition to the projects which were cofinanced within the framework of the European Year - have taken up the theme of lifelong learning. These have included major reforms of the education and training systems, measures focusing on educational participation by unrepresented groups, pilot actions and government policy documents. At Community level, the Amsterdam Treaty (as a lasting heritage of the European Year) has enshrined the principle of lifelong learning in the preamble to the the EC Treaty, whereby the Contracting parties state that they are 'determined to promote the development of the highest possible level of knowledge for their peoples through wide access to education and through its continuous updating'. Equally, this concept received a further impetus from the publication of the Commission's White Paper "Teaching and Learning - Towards the Learning Society" which sets out a series of objectives to generalise lifelong learning throughout European society, or, again, in the Action Plan "Learning in the information society" presented by the Commission in 1996. At the end of the European Year, on 20.12.1996, the Council adopted "Conclusions on a strategy for lifelong learning" which presented a set of principles underpinning a strategy for lifelong learning and a framework of areas for further development. ?

## European year of lifelong learning, 1996 (dec. 2493/95/EC). Report

The committee adopted the report by Cristina GUTIÉRREZ CORTINES (EPP-ED, E) on the Commission report on the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996). The committee regretted the slow start of the activities under the European Year of Lifelong Learning and said that procedures for the launch of Community actions in future should be speeded up. It pointed out that general education and training were not only important for personal development and improving one's chances for the future, but also represented a significant factor in the Member States' attempts to meet the challenges of global competition. The committee therefore regretted that the budget for the European Year of Lifelong Learning 1996 was only EUR 8.4 m for the 15 Member States and their three EEA partners. It also regretted the lack of qualitative data in the Commission's report and called on the Commission to improve the quality of future evaluation reports. The Commission was also urged to define various concepts and aspects of vocational training and lifelong learning more precisely in future programmes and to rapidly implement action programmes and specific measures in the context of a strategy for lifelong education and learning, in coordination with the Socrates II and Leonardo programmes. Lastly, the report called on the Commission to ensure that priority projects included vocational training in the sectors where innovation and change were most urgently needed. ?

## European year of lifelong learning, 1996 (dec. 2493/95/EC). Report

In adopting a Resolution on the Commission's Report on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the European Year of Lifelong

Learning (1996), the European Parliament stresses that Lifelong Learning is crucial in order to secure personal fulfilment, social integration and participation in democratic decision-making processes and can, therefore, not be seen merely in terms of demand and supply. Furthermore, it stresses that the impact which the year had on businesses and social forces in terms of awareness-raising was positive. However, the Parliament regrets the slow start of the activities under the European Year and calls upon the Commission to speed up preparatory work and internal procedures in order to allow for a timely launch of Community actions in future. The Parliament also stresses the importance of the necessary attention being paid to the lifelong learning factor in the implementation of the new generation of programmes such as Socrates II and Leonardo. With regard to the budgetary aspect however, the Parliament regrets the fact that the budget for the European Year of Lifelong Learning 1996 was only ECU 8.4 m for the fifteen Member States and their three EEA partners. The Parliament also believes that the fact that the ECU 8.4 m budget was trebled by the cofinancing provided by the participant countries, thus bringing the total budget to ECU 34 m, proves how much interest there is in initiatives of this kind in Europe. With regard to the Commission's report, the Parliament believes that requests for projects to be submitted was ambiguous and that the report lacked qualitative data. In addition, it believes that the report lacked sufficient information about examples of good practice and that it also lacked an evaluation of the involvement of democratically elected local and regional bodies. Against this background, the Parliament calls on the Commission to, amongst others, address the following: - define various concepts and aspects of vocational training and lifelong learning more precisely in future programmes; - provide clearer terms of reference in the submission of projects seeking funding; - that the Commission and Member States devise specific measures to encourage relations between formal education, vocational training and lifelong learning; - that the Commission create European networks of vocational training centres and enterprises; - that the Commission ensure that the priority projects include vocational training in the sectors where innovation and change are most urgently needed. In conclusion, the Parliament calls on the Member States to cooperate with the Commission in the collection of data concerning lifelong learning, with a view to ensuring the future comparability of data at European level. Also, the Parliament calls on the Member States to extend the information networks so as to ensure wide public access to targeted information on the existing programmes in this field. The Parliament instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and parliaments of the member States, the Republic of Iceland, the Kingdom of Norway and the Principality of Liechtenstein.?