

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2000/2141(COS)	Procedure completed
European Community's development policy		
Subject 6.30 Development cooperation		

Key players				
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed	
	DEVE Development and Cooperation		25/05/2000	
		PPE-DE GEMELLI Vitaliano		
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed	
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		12/07/2000	
		PSE CARRILHO Maria		
	BUDG Budgets		19/07/2000	
		PSE HAUG Jutta		
	ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy		22/06/2000	
		V/ALE LUCAS Caroline		
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		11/07/2000	
		V/ALE SÖRENSEN Patsy		
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date	
	Development	2352	31/05/2001	
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner		
	Development			

Key events			
26/04/2000	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2000)0212	Summary
16/06/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
12/02/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
12/02/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0059/2001	
01/03/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0118/2001	Summary
01/03/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		

31/05/2001	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
01/10/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2000/2141(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	DEVE/5/12732

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2000)0212	26/04/2000	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0059/2001	12/02/2001	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0118/2001 OJ C 277 01.10.2001, p. 0020-0130	01/03/2001	EP	Summary

European Community's development policy

PURPOSE : to present a Communication on reshaping and refocussing the Community's development policy. CONTENT: The Commission acknowledges that there have been a number of justified criticisms of the EU's development policy. Stakeholders have especially commented on the lack of an overall strategy and the fact that the objectives of the policy are too numerous, vague, and not ranked in any way. Instruments rather than policy objectives guide policies. There are also concerns about the effectiveness of EU policy in relation to the national development co-operation programmes of the Member States. The Community has certain specific advantages, the key ones being its critical mass in financial terms and its capacity to ensure coherence and synergies between aid, trade and economic co-operation and political dialogue. These are the pillars on which its overarching objective of poverty eradication will be based. Development policy will be supported by commercial policy, the objective of which is to integrate developing countries into the world economy and encourage sound domestic strategies. The Community's development policy will be reduced to six areas where it can offer comparative advantages and added value. These are: -trade for development -regional integration and co-operation -macroeconomic policies linked to poverty reduction strategies, in particular the strengthening of social sectors like health and education. The Commission sees macroeconomic policy as the key to ensuring sustainable and accessible social services. -reliable and sustainable transport which plays a key role in access to basic social services. -food security and sustainable rural development strategies -institution capacity building, good governance and the rule of law. These areas are mutually reinforcing and inter-related. Cross-cutting issues such as gender aspects, environmental sustainability and human rights will be fully integrated into all activities. There will be increased emphasis on budgetary support and sector programming. In addition, the Commission will seek to ensure better coherence between development policy and other Community policies such as trade, agriculture, fisheries, migration and health. At the strategic level, there will be better co-ordination among Member States' bilateral development programmes. A number of reforms are also discussed in the paper, including administrative reform and improvements in internal control. Improvements in the impact of development assistance are also discussed. resources should be allocated not only on need but also according to countries' performance in terms of policy reforms and outcomes.?

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The committee adopted the report by Vitalino GEMELLI (EPP-ED, I) on the Commission communication. The report was fairly critical of the Commission, saying that, in the EU today, there was a lack of long-term vision and as a result the policies it was implementing were partial and contingent. It advocated a different approach, consisting of a development policy strategy which would require that resources be used more rationally and would demand more appropriate investment. However, it supported the Commission's approach of ensuring that development policy focused on eradicating poverty in the general context of the EU's external relations and stressed that effective poverty eradication strategies must give equal attention to the strengthening of social and health infrastructures and of the productive capacities of the poor, i.e. access to land, technology, education, credits, etc. As part of long-term planning, it was also necessary to help developing countries with the task of institutional capacity-building, good governance and administration, including the control of the use of public funds. The committee felt that the EU and the Member States ought to wield greater political influence within international development aid organisations. It also stressed that globalisation had led to further imbalances in world trade by marginalising the developing countries and that NGOs and representatives of civil society must be involved in the planning and implementation of development policy. ?

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The European Parliament adopted unanimously the report by Mr Vitaliano GEMELLI (EPP/ED, I) which argues that there is a lack of long term vision on development policy issues. As a result of the policies proposed by the Commission paper on the subject are 'partial and contingent'. The House regrets the fact that the Commission is not asking for more rational use of resources and more appropriate investment and that there is no political will in Council to take any decision on this issue. The resolution calls in particular for the EU to ensure coherence between development policy and other EU policies. It supports the Commission's approach to centre development policy on the aim of poverty eradication. There is concern that the initiative to cancel the debt of the HIPC (Heavy Indebted Poor Countries) is being implemented too slowly and concerns only a minority of countries. The resolution urges the Commission to preserve development policy as an independent area and to clarify the roles of all those concerned in managing aid delivery - there is particular concern that the proposed separation between political responsibility and strategic planning could result in the marginalisation of development policy. Among the amendments adopted was one stressing the need to establish reliable indicators for evaluating progress achieved in improving health science and judging the impact of macro-economic policy on the health of the population. Another amendment underlines the need for developing countries to become self sufficient in food. A further anticipates the reduction or cancellation of external debt so long as the funds that are saved are used exclusively to combat poverty, particularly, in the field of health and education. ?

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The Swedish Presidency concluded that the Council had noted the following: - Progress had been made, but some things remained to be done. - Improved focus on results-orientation, always bearing in mind the international development targets, is an absolute necessity. The gap between commitments and disbursements has to decrease. Further collaboration and co-ordination within the EU and with other donors is required, based on partnership and national plans such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and through sector programmes. The indicators in the Annual Report should assess impact of EC assistance in terms of poverty reduction and targets, and indicate where improvements have been made in quality and effectiveness, including integration of horizontal issues and coherence aspects. The Council agreed conclusions on improving the effectiveness of external action, including holding an orientation debate at the beginning of each year starting in 2001. Improving quality and efficiency is its core priority. It called on the Commission to present: - an Annual Report on Community Development Policy, which should, inter alia, inform on the results and achievements of Community policy; inform on progress in the concentration of assistance into the six priority fields; inform on progress made on the mainstreaming of horizontal aspects; cover impact measured against horizontal indicators, including a synthesis of project score card and evaluation results. - a Programme of Action which should be forward looking, and cover all actions required to translate the Community's development policy into reality in all developing countries. It should inform on the intended outcome of each action, the target date for completion, and report on progress to date. ?