Procedure file

Basic information

COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2000/2153(COS)	Procedure completed
Competition policy. 29th report 1999 Subject 2.60 Competition		

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	ELDR RIIS-JØRGENSEN Karin	23/11/1999
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market	PPE-DE PALACIO VALLELERSUNDI Ana	21/06/2000
Council of the European Union			
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Competition		

Key events

05/05/2000	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(2000)0720	Summary
03/07/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/10/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
11/10/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0290/2000	
23/10/2000	Debate in Parliament		
24/10/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0457/2000	Summary
24/10/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
12/07/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2000/2153(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	ECON/5/12760

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		SEC(2000)0720	05/05/2000	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0290/2000 OJ C 197 12.07.2001, p. 0008	11/10/2000	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0457/2000 OJ C 197 12.07.2001, p. 0025-0096	24/10/2000	EP	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		CES0039/2001 OJ C 123 25.04.2001, p. 0011	25/01/2001	ESC	

Competition policy. 29th report 1999

PURPOSE : to present the XXIXth report on competition policy 1999. CONTENT : there are two principle objectives that underlie Community competition law. The first is the maintenance of competitive markets. Competition policy serves as an instrument to encourage industrial efficiency, the optimal allocation of resources, technical progress and the flexibility to adjust to a changing environment. The Community needs a competitive home market in order for it to be competitive on the world markets. Thus the policy has always taken a very strong line against price fixing, market-sharing cartels, abuses of dominant positions and anticompetitive mergers. It has also prohibited unjustified state-aid which does not guarantee the long-term viability of firms but distorts competition by keeping them artificially in business. The second objective is the single market. An internal market is an essential condition for the development of a single market. The Commission has used competition policy to prevent those wishing to erect private barriers to trade. It fines heavily the parties to two main types of agreement: distribution and licensing agreements that prevent parallel trade between Member States, and agreements between competitors to keep out of one another's territories. The implementation of these two objectives and the drive to modernise competition rules are described in some detail in this report. With regard to the candidate countries, progress has been made in the preparation or adoption of new competition laws. This progress is further described in the report. The Commission has also adopted a series of measures designed to inform the public of the positive impact of competition policy. In 1999, the total umber of new cases was 1201, comprising 388 antitrust cases (under Articles 81, 82 and 86), 301 merger cases, and 512 state aid cases. This indicates an increase in merger and state aid cases as compared to 1998. In the antitrust sphere there were two notable features: the first an increase in the number of cases closed by way of formal decision. Secondly, there was a drop in the number of new cases, comprising notifications, complaints, and ex officio proceedings. The drop in notifications can be partly attributed to companies anticipating the Commission's reforms in the area of vertical restraints, with the publication in 1988 of the Communication setting out the reforms in this area. The reduction in the number of complaints can probably be explained by sectoral factors, such as the tied cases in the brewing sector in the UK. Moreover, some cases which may previously have been dealt with by the Commission are now being handled by the national authorities. The main factors underlying the current merger wave are the globalisation of the markets, the introduction of the euro, the completion of the single market and the forthcoming enlargement. These factors will continue to generate high levels of merger activity in Europe for the foreseeable future.?

Competition policy. 29th report 1999

The committee adopted the report by Karin RIIS-JØRGENSEN (ELDR, DK) on the Commission·s 29th report on EU competition policy (1999). The report expressed support for a review of existing procedures and for an enhanced role for the European Parliament when Council adopted new legislation in the competition policy area by qualified majority, through the application of the codecision procedure. The rapporteur was anxious to ensure that the reforms to follow from the Commission·s White Paper, while removing unnecessary bureaucracy through the abolition of notification and authorisation procedures, would at the same time lead to legal certainty, especially as regards the clarification of the roles of national authorities and the Commission. The primacy of European law should not be undermined. As far as agreements were concerned, the report supported the notion of decisions being based on economic analysis with precedence given to promoting efficiency across the EU. The report raised the question of mergers by large companies in small Member States and emphasised the importance of completing the single market, so that the position of such companies could be considered in a wider European context. The rapporteur also wanted to see more consultation with interested parties, the minimum time period for assessing Commission communications increased from one to three months and consideration given to the adoption of a code of conduct for antitrust investigations so as to protect confidential information, in particular relating to computer searches. Other points taken up in the report included state aids (it called for league tables to be established), aid to South Korean shipbuilders and the application of EU competition policy rules to the applicant Member States. ?

Competition policy. 29th report 1999

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Mrs Karin RIIS-JORGENSEN (ELDR, Dk) on the Commission's 29th report on EU competition policy with 274 to 247 with 23 abstentions in favour. The main concerns expressed by the committee responsible were adopted at

the Plenary session (please refer to the previous stage in the legislative process).?