


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2000/2209(INI)	Procedure completed
Out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes (recomm. 98/257/EC), Tampere European council conclusions		
Subject 4.60.06 Consumers' economic and legal interests		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market	ELDR WALLIS Diana	25/05/2000

Key events			
08/09/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/04/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
24/04/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0134/2001	
02/07/2001	Debate in Parliament		
03/07/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0372/2001	Summary
03/07/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/03/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2209(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Implementation
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142-p2; Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	JURI/5/13593

Documentation gateway				
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2000)0405	17/03/2000	EC

Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading	A5-0134/2001	24/04/2001	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading	T5-0372/2001 OJ C 065 14.03.2002, p. 0023-0051 E	03/07/2001	EP	Summary

Out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes (recomm. 98/257/EC), Tampere European council conclusions

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Diana WALLIS (ELDR, UK) on Community policy on out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes. It welcomed the Commission's proposal that a European Extra-Judicial Network (EEJ-Net) be set up but stressed that, in the first instance, attempts should be made to solve a dispute directly between the consumer and the trader before resorting to extra-judicial solutions. The Commission was also urged to introduce a best practice charter to help educate and inform consumers. The committee made a number of recommendations to be borne in mind when developing the EEJ-Net. For example, clearing houses must be in a position to give preliminary legal advice and should therefore have access to lawyers with professional liability insurance. A large-scale information campaign was needed to publicise the scheme, possibly involving consumers' associations and chambers of commerce. As well as start-up funding, there was also a need for longer-term funding for the scheme, particularly in those Member States with little experience of alternative extra-judicial systems. It was also important to ensure that the scheme was run coherently, with provision for service-level agreements prescribing the basic level of service which citizens could expect across the EU. Provision should be made for systematic monitoring of the EEJ-Net to check for discrepancies between the Member States and provide feedback. There should also be better coordination between the various departments of the Commission. Another key point raised by the report was the need for multilingual forms and documents to be used by the clearing houses so that consumers could use their own language in settling disputes. Complaint forms should be clear and simple. Lastly, the committee felt that the EEJ-Net should be extended as soon as possible to cover the applicant countries and the EEA States.

Out-of-court settlement of consumer disputes (recomm. 98/257/EC), Tampere European council conclusions

The European Parliament adopted, by 522 votes to 9 with 11 abstentions, the own-initiative report by Mrs Diana WALLIS (ELDR, UK). The report suggests ways of improving the Commission's working paper on the creation of a European Extra-Judicial Network (EEJ Net) for the out-of-court-settlement of such disputes. (Please refer to the previous text for an outline of the amendments proposed by the committee responsible and which were adopted by the House). ?