

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2001/2207(COS)	Procedure completed
Economic and social cohesion. 2nd report		
Subject 4 Economic, social and territorial cohesion		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism		Appointed 20/03/2001
			PPE-DE MUSOTTO Francesco
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs		Appointed 10/04/2001
			PSE ETTL Harald
	ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy		21/03/2001
			PSE DAMIÃO Elisa Maria
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
Council of the European Union	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development		The committee decided not to give an opinion.
	PECH Fisheries		29/05/2001
			V/ALE NOGUEIRA ROMÁN Camilo
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities		11/09/2001
European Commission			PSE TORRES MARQUES Helena
Council of the European Union	Council configuration		Meeting
	General Affairs		2409 Date 18/02/2002
European Commission	Commission DG		Commissioner
	Regional and Urban Policy		

Key events			
31/01/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0024	Summary
10/12/2001	Committee referral announced in		

	Parliament		
19/12/2001	Vote in committee		
19/12/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0007/2002	
06/02/2002	Debate in Parliament		
07/02/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0060/2002	Summary
07/02/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
18/02/2002	Debate in Council	2409	
21/11/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2001/2207(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	RETT/5/15352

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0024	31/01/2001	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0074/2001 OJ C 107 03.05.2002, p. 0027	14/11/2001	CofR	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0007/2002	19/12/2001	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0060/2002 OJ C 284 21.11.2002, p. 0209-0329 E	07/02/2002	EP	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2003)0034	30/01/2003	EC	Summary

Economic and social cohesion. 2nd report

PURPOSE: to present the Commission's Second Report on Economic and Social Cohesion. **CONTENT:** The Commission has chosen to present the Second Report on Economic and Social Cohesion at the beginning of 2001, which falls immediately after the first phase of the implementation of the reform of the Structural Funds, and after certain key decisions have been taken as regards financial allocations and geographical eligibility for support. It is, therefore, already possible at this stage to make a broad ex-ante assessment of the possible impact of reform. As the Treaty and the general Regulation on the Structural Funds require, the Report analyses the changes in cohesion and the factors which contribute to it. Without prejudging the timing, the procedures or the order of countries entering, the working hypothesis adopted relates to an enlarged Union of 27 Member States. So far as the data allow, each part of the Report includes consideration of the situation in an enlarged Union. This should be the context for analysis, rather than in terms of a more static analysis of the respective situation in the present 15 Member States and the 12 countries with which accession negotiations are taking place. An analysis of the regional features in Turkey, the 13th candidate country with which negotiations have not yet begun, is included separately. The report develops a set of conclusions and recommendations with a view to opening up a debate on the future of cohesion policy after 2006 in an enlarged European Union. The Commission is convinced that for the future, important changes will be required to a policy which was designed for the present Member States. While enlargement is a major part of the explanation for the need for change, it is not the only one in view of the far reaching economic and social and territorial changes affecting the present EU States. These changes are also examined in the report. The Commission itself is organising a Cohesion Forum in Brussels on 21 and 22 May 2001 to provide an opportunity for the exchange of ideas and discussion of future cohesion policy. The candidate countries will be fully involved in this consultation exercise. At a later stage, the Commission will set out proposals which will then be presented to the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers for a new cohesion policy to take effect from 1 January 2007. ?

Economic and social cohesion. 2nd report

The European Parliament adopted the report by Francesco MUSOTTO (EPP-ED, I). It welcomes the results achieved in recent years as regards cohesion and the favourable impact it has had on the European Union's regional policy regarding the reinforcement of economic and social cohesion in the Community as a whole. It also points out that the principle of cohesion, and thus solidarity, is sanctioned by the Treaties and constitutes one of the foundation stones for integration of the Union's peoples and territories. It emphasises, however, that the progress made has been uneven and that specifically, although there has been a recovery in terms of per capita income among the Member States, unacceptable regional disparities remain, and these gulfs are widening instead of narrowing, leading to grave concerns about the possible further marginalisation of the most underdeveloped regions. It notes that with enlargement differences and disparities between the regions will substantially increase. The Parliament is convinced that a proper regional development policy must create conditions in underdeveloped areas that will promote new economic initiatives, stimulate the optimal use of regional resources and remove the structural factors responsible for delays, instead of restricting itself to merely reducing their effects through the compensatory transfers of resources. The resolution stresses the need to promote the overall harmonious development of the Community and points out that the European spatial development perspective (ESDP) can make a positive contribution to the development of a polycentric model. It expresses concern at the sharp disparities in unemployment which persists in many regions of the EU, together with the inadequate levels of vocational training and firmly believes that a proper regional development policy with flexible instruments can create fresh investment prospects and job opportunities in the less-favoured areas as well as helping to make optimum use of existing regional resources. It, on the other hand, deplores that partnership has only been partially applied; in fact, in some sectors (NGOs local authorities) have only been consulted at a late stage or have been given limited time to contribute to 2000-06 programming. The Parliament asks the competent national and regional authorities to apply the "bottom-up" principle at all programming, implementation and evaluation stages, so that local and regional actors are fully involved both in current EU regions and in the applicant countries. It regrets the fact that no penalty can be imposed when Member States infringe the additionality principle. It requests that the Commission present at the earliest opportunity a more detailed analysis of the impact of the principal Community policies on economic and social cohesion on the basis of the socio-economic indicators being drawn up and considers therefore that it is vitally important to implement a system to monitor variations in the impact of the various Community policies on European cohesion. With regard to cohesion policy after 2006, the Parliament welcomes the Commission's second report on economic and social cohesion and considers it to be useful and necessary basis for embarking on a broader debate on post-2006 cohesion policy. It regrets however that insufficient attention is being paid to the challenge posed by the forthcoming enlargement of the Union. Lastly, with regard to the funding for the future cohesion policy, the Parliament reiterates that future cohesion policy must be based on the principle of solidarity, partnership and additionality. It believes that it is not possible to fall below the level of 0.45% of Community GDP earmarked for cohesion policy without jeopardising the success of cohesion policy objectives and also believes that an evaluation of the needs of cohesion policy is necessary in the immediate future in the context of the financial perspectives with a view to enlargement. It reiterates the importance of the principle of additionality, as the only way of ensuring sufficient resources and operational synergies with Member States' governments. With this in view, it believes that the ceiling for Community funds should remain at 4% of national GDP for all Member States.?