Procedure file

Basic information

COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	2001/2250(COS)	Procedure completed
2004 enlargement: impact on regions bordering candidate countries, action for border regions Subject 4.70.05 Regional cooperation, cross-border cooperation 8.20.26 Enlargement's regional point of view		

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism		20/11/2001
		PPE-DE SOMMER Renate	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense		
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs		09/10/2001
		GUE/NGL BRIE André	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Budget	2388	21/11/2001
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations		

Key events

25/07/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0437	Summary
21/11/2001	Debate in Council	2388	
28/11/2001	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/03/2002	Vote in committee		
21/03/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0096/2002	
12/06/2002	Debate in Parliament		
13/06/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0319/2002	Summary
13/06/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		

30/10/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2001/2250(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RETT/5/15475

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0437	25/07/2001	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0096/2002	21/03/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0319/2002 OJ C 261 30.10.2003, p. 0388-0557 E	13/06/2002	EP	Summary
Follow-up document		COM(2002)0660	29/11/2002	EC	Summary

2004 enlargement: impact on regions bordering candidate countries, action for border regions

PURPOSE : to present an Action Plan for regions bordering candidate countries. CONTENT : the Community Action for Border Regions presented in this Communication covers a wide range of measures which can be applied to meet the specific needs of the different sectors concerned. The Commission proposes better co-ordination of existing instruments in border regions, use of the flexibility margin of applicable state aid rules and additional investment in specific areas, in particular to transport and environmental infrastructure. A further important task is to develop an effective information and communication strategy that can help to maximise the benefits of enlargement in the border regions. The proposed new measures should help to enhance cross-border co-operation and the development of new economic regions, creating new opportunities for growth and employment on both sides of the border. To be more specific, the Commission's main recommendations include: - higher investment in the transport infrastructure in the framework of the trans-European network (TEN) through an increase in the maximum level of Community support for TEN-projects to 20% and with special financial assistance for TEN projects in border regions amounting to EUR 150 million in the period 2003-2006; - co-operation activites for SMEs funded through a specific EUR 15 million pilot project initiated by the European Parliament for the period 2001-2002; - Community support of up to EUR 20 million for networking measures between border regions and candidate countries in the framework of INTERREG; - better co-ordination of the INTERREG III A and Phare Cross-Border Co-operation programme; - facilitate the co-financing for transnational (INTERREG B) or interregional (INTERREG C) co-operation projects in well-founded cases; - a special programme of the EIB to support environmental and transport infrastructure projects; - a EUR 10 million boost in funding for the European YOUTH programme; - making full use of the flexibility provided by existing state aid rules on the geographical eligibility and intensity of state aid for regional purposes. With regard to the budgetary aspects, the Commission proposes to dedicate an additional EUR 195 million for border regions with applicant countries in the period 2001-2006. Lastly, with to the principle of subsidiarity, this Action needs to be complemented by, and co-ordinated with, appropriate measures at the national, regional and local levels.?

2004 enlargement: impact on regions bordering candidate countries, action for border regions

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Renate SOMMER (EPP-ED, German) emphasising the specific problems of border regions post-enlargement. The exceptional burdens imposed on Objective 1 areas lying directly on a border will need to be taken properly into account. The strategy proposed by the Commission is a first step towards tackling the specific problems of the border regions by means of the targeted package of measures. With regard to structural policy instruments, Parliament called for the drawing-up of a catalogue of indicators - still to be defined- to counteract any social and economic problems. Specific assistance to border regions should be available in addition to the existing assistance options. SMU's should receive more INTERREG funding. Parliament does not consider the endowment of EUR 195 million to be adequate given the scale of the task. Given the figure, the percentage for TEN is too high, since the border region will only be able to benefit indirectly from the extension of the TEN routes. It welcomes the agreement between the two arms of the budgetary authority to increase the endowment by EUR 65 million. This should be assigned to solving the specific problems faced by SMUs in the border regions.?

2004 enlargement: impact on regions bordering candidate countries, action for border regions

PURPOSE : to present the first progress report on the action plan for regions bordering applicant countries. CONTENT : the progress report demonstrates that the action plan for border regions, which was adopted by the Commission on 25 July 2001, is being well implemented. The action plan proposed a series of measures designed to strengthen economic competitiveness of border regions in view of EU enlargement.

Twenty-three regions in Austria, Finland, Germany, Greece and Italy are involved. Particular progress has been achieved in the following areas: - SME support: The Commission has made available co-financing of Euro 10 million for a pilot project developed by the Working Community of the Chambers of Economy in the EU Regions bordering the applicant countries. The project will help SMEs identify the opportunities, challenges and risks resulting from enlargement, assist them in designing new business strategies and activities and promote their co-operation across the borders of the future Member States; - Networking activities: The Commission has approved additional funding of Euro 20 million for three INTERREG III C programmes (North, East, South) as well for the INTERACT programme. Operations foreseen include networks and individual co-operation projects aimed at encouraging and facilitating co-operation in border regions in order to strengthen their economic competitiveness; - Transport / SMEs: The Commission has approved additional funding of Euro 30 million to the 13 Strand A INTERREG programmes covering the borders with candidate countries as well as to the Strand B INTERREG programme for the Baltic Sea Region. Priority shall be given to the strengthening of transport systems, supporting SMEs particularly affected by enlargement as well as supporting training and inter-cultural co-operation actions; - Improved co-ordination between Phare CBC and INTERREG: The Commission has modified the Phare-CBC Regulation in order to achieve more consistency with the INTERREG approach. In addition, it modified the INTERREG guidelines to include Vienna in the INTERREG III A programmes with Hungary and the Czech Republic. The Commission will maintain its support for border regions particularly affected by EU enlargement: The following activities are either ongoing or envisaged for 2003: - continuation of support measures for SMEs, particularly in the most affected business sectors, including the promotion of business co-operation and transfer of technical know-how; - consolidation of actions for workers, such as advice and guidance to workers on social and labour legislation on both sides of the border and other information on the acquis in the area of free movement of persons at the time of accession; - continuation of measures to prepare local and regional public administration bodies for increased mobility and migration and to help implement targeted social, cultural and educational initiatives for their citizens.?