

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2004/2221(INI)	Procedure completed
Draft European Union drugs strategy for 2005 to 2012		
Subject 7.30.30.04 Action to combat drugs and drug-trafficking		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs		
European Parliament	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Agriculture and Fisheries	2702	20/12/2005
	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs	2627	06/12/2004
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2618	19/11/2004
	Justice and Home Affairs (JHA)	2613	25/10/2004

Key events			
28/09/2004	Non-legislative basic document published	B6-0070/2004	
25/10/2004	Debate in Council	2613	
28/10/2004	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
02/12/2004	Vote in committee		Summary
06/12/2004	Debate in Council	2627	Summary
07/12/2004	Committee report tabled for plenary	A6-0067/2004	
14/12/2004	Debate in Parliament		
15/12/2004	Results of vote in Parliament		
15/12/2004	Decision by Parliament	T6-0101/2004	Summary
15/12/2004	End of procedure in Parliament		
20/12/2005	Debate in Council	2702	

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2004/2221(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 134o-p3
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	LIBE/6/24515

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		B6-0070/2004	29/09/2004	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A6-0067/2004	07/12/2004	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0101/2004 OJ C 226 15.09.2005, p. 0073-0233 E	15/12/2004	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2005)239	19/01/2005	EC	
Follow-up document		SEC(2006)1803	21/12/2006	EC	Summary

Draft European Union drugs strategy for 2005 to 2012

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Giusto CATANIA (GUE/NGL, IT) on the European Strategy on fighting drugs (2005-2012). MEPs stressed that problems such as drug trafficking and drug abuse could not be solved by each country acting alone, and that the EU needed to adopt a common strategy to tackle drug problems. However, they also wanted national drug policies to be based on scientific knowledge about each type of drug, not on "an emotional response".

The committee formulated a series of recommendations ahead of the December 2004 EU summit which was set to adopt a new EU Drugs Strategy for 2005-2012. Existing European cooperation on drugs policy should be revamped in order to tackle cross-border and large-scale drug trafficking and to take account of all the implications of the problem, using a scientific approach. A detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of the previous strategy should be carried out, with particular regard to prevention of use and dependence, a reduction in the supply of and demand for illicit drugs, the limitation of social (i.e. marginalisation) and health damage and the reduction in drug-related petty crime and organised crime. The new drugs strategy should not be adopted until the real results of the previous strategy were known.

MEPs wanted the Council to propose measures totally different from those currently being used to achieve overall EU drugs strategy goals. For example, priority should be given to protecting the lives and health of users of illicit substances, improving their wellbeing and protection and preventing them from being marginalised. They added that the Council should make harm reduction programmes more widely available, especially to prevent the spread of HIV and other blood-borne diseases among drug users. MEPs also wanted the Council to set minimum standards for rehabilitation measures instead of placing too much emphasis on treatment with drug substitutes. The committee was keen for rehabilitation programmes to be set up for offenders and users as alternatives to prison and it urged governments to do more to prevent drugs entering prisons. Greater attention should also be focused on information and prevention measures: the Council was urged to boost funding for science-based information campaigns and to fund consultations with civil society organisations and professionals about the impact of drug policies. Moreover, following the arrival of ten new Member States, more cooperation was needed with the states on the EU's new frontiers as these were closer to the countries where drugs originate.

The Council was also urged to take steps to prevent the profits from illegal drug trafficking being used to fund international terrorism. Lastly, MEPs called for development aid to drug-producing countries to be increased through programmes to fund sustainable alternative crops and increase research into the use of plants like hemp, opium and coca leaves for medical applications, food security and other beneficial purposes.

Draft European Union drugs strategy for 2005 to 2012

The European Council adopted the Drugs Strategy 2005-2012, which will be included in the Hague Programme. The Strategy will be a key instrument to effectively confront drugs use and trafficking with a view to ensuring a high level of health protection, wellbeing and social cohesion, as well as a high level of security for the general public.

The European Council invited the Commission to present to the Council a proposal for an Action Plan for implementation of the Strategy in 2005-2008 with a view to its adoption by the Council early in 2005 and to prepare an evaluation of its implementation in 2008.

Draft European Union drugs strategy for 2005 to 2012

The European Parliament adopted by 285 votes in favour, 273 against with 23 abstentions and own-initiative report by Giusto CATANIA

(GUE/NGL, IT) making recommendations to the Council and to the European Council, on the European strategy on fighting drugs (2005-2012). (Please see the summary of 02/12/04.) They need to take account of the fact that the assessments made to date of the six main objectives set by the EU Drugs Strategy (2000-2004) show that none of them achieved favourable results and draw political and legislative lessons from this when devising the EU Drugs Strategy (2005-2012) and the related action plans.

Parliament wanted them to establish assessment measures which will allow shortcomings in - and more appropriate measures and resources to achieve - the goals set out in the EU Drugs

Strategy to be correctly detected and rectified. Parliament also wanted the Council and European Council to define and exponentially step up the involvement and participation of drug addicts and users of illicit substances, civil society, NGOs, the voluntary sector and the general public in resolving drug-related problems.

Draft European Union drugs strategy for 2005 to 2012

According to the EU Action Plan on Drugs, the Commission is obliged to present annual progress reviews to the Council and the European Parliament on the implementation thereof. The objective of the review is to report not only on progress thus far but to identify possible gaps in the programme and future challenges. This is the first such Review presented by the Commission.

Methodology:

The European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), with its REITOX network, played a key role in helping to prepare this report. Data, collected by Europol from the Member States was also used. The direct participation of Member States was needed for actions not yet fully covered by either the EMCDDA or Europol.

The 2006 overview report is a comprehensive and far-reaching Progress Review, which has been divided into five parts:

Section 1: covers the main developments in the EU since the endorsement of the EU Action Plan.

Section 2: deals with Actions under the current Plan for which the deadline is 2006 or ongoing. Where necessary a "recommendation" is proposed.

Section 3: concerns Actions under the current Plan for which the deadline is 2007 or 2008 but for which special attention is required. Where necessary a "recommendation" is proposed.

Section 4: deals with the financing of Actions vis-à-vis the new programmes that are currently being prepared in the context of the financial framework 2007-2013.

Section 5: Conclusions.

The main findings of the report are that the current continuous monitoring exercise, with its objective annual Progress Reviews leading to a final evaluation in 2008, appears to be effective at keeping track of the current state of play. Some matters of general interest, nevertheless, require a more detailed analysis. They are:

Coordination. To be effective, overall strategies need to be linked to specific practical programmes. The successful implementation of the EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan requires effective coordination at all levels: national, EU and institutional. Coordination between the public health and law enforcement communities, for example, is not always optimal and coordination between relevant Council working groups on drugs could be improved.

Monitoring. Here too, internal coordination is an issue, both within EU institutions and within national administrations. For some actions relating mainly to supply reduction, it is proving difficult to measure progress at national level. The readiness, or ability, of the Member States to provide data for the monitoring of the actions concerned requires further discussion in the HDG. The Commission is ready to examine ways of simplifying and rationalising the indicators concerned, in coordination with Europol and the EMCDDA.

Assessment tools/indicators of the Action Plan. In the case of Actions 10.2, 10.3, 11.2, 34.2 and 40.1, the assessment tools of the Plan did not enable a clear view to be formed of their implementation. The Commission, in cooperation with the EMCDDA, is therefore proposing several alternatives, marked as "recommendations" in the text. These new assessment tools/indicators ? if approved - will be used for the 2007 Progress Review.

Consultation of civil society. Wider consultation with civil society could add value to the evaluation exercise and make it more transparent. Following the publication of the Commission's Green paper on the consultation of civil society in the drugs field, a more targeted consultative process is planned for 2007 or 2008, depending on the timetable for implementation of the financial framework.