

# Procedure file

Basic information	
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1994/2109(COS)
Social policy. White Paper	Procedure completed
Subject	4.10 Social policy, social charter and protocol

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee for opinion <b>FEMM</b> Women's Rights	Rapporteur for opinion PSE <a href="#">VAN LANCKER Anne</a>	Appointed 16/09/1994
	Council of the European Union	Council configuration Social Affairs	Meeting <a href="#">1813</a> Date 06/12/1994

Key events			
27/07/1994	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1994)0333	Summary
14/09/1994	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
06/12/1994	Debate in Council	<a href="#">1813</a>	
20/12/1994	Vote in committee		Summary
20/12/1994	Committee report tabled for plenary	<a href="#">A4-0122/1994</a>	
18/01/1995	Debate in Parliament		
19/01/1995	Decision by Parliament	T4-0009/1995	Summary
19/01/1995	End of procedure in Parliament		
20/02/1995	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1994/2109(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

## Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(1994)0333	27/07/1994	EC	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		<a href="#">CDR0243/1994</a> <a href="#">OJ C 210 14.08.1995, p. 0067</a>	16/11/1994	CofR	Summary
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		<a href="#">CES1307/1994</a> <a href="#">OJ C 397 31.12.1994, p. 0033</a>	23/11/1994	ESC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		<a href="#">A4-0122/1994</a> <a href="#">OJ C 043 20.02.1995, p. 0004</a>	20/12/1994	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0009/1995 <a href="#">OJ C 043 20.02.1995, p. 0052-0063</a>	19/01/1995	EP	Summary

## Social policy. White Paper

This White Paper on European social policy ("a way forward for the Union") follows on from the Green Paper on social policy, which sought the opinions of all interested parties in Europe on the shape of European social policy over coming years. This White Paper addresses several subjects: - volume I: main lines of action at Union level over coming years; - volume II: summary of Member States' responses to the Green Paper. The White Paper (volume I) lays down a framework for Union action in the social sector which takes account of past achievements, especially in labour legislation, health and safety in the workplace, freedom of movement and equal treatment of men and women. It also aims to create new momentum by presenting new proposals in both these and other areas, such as social protection, equal opportunities and public health. It also endeavours to stimulate a new partnership between the Member States, the social partners, charities and public bodies, European citizens and international organizations in this changing process. The principles and objectives which need to guide European action are as follows: - economic and social integration, with employment as the top priority; - competitiveness and social progress, which need to go hand in hand; - convergence of social policy, which must respect the diverse social conditions in the Member States; - minimum joint standards, which need to be developed in order to preserve the cohesion of the Union, taking account of different national systems and requirements and the relative economic forces of the different Member States. In order to meet these objectives, the Commission proposes Community legislation and collective agreements, financial assistance and support measures, mobilizing cooperation at Member State level and information on and an analysis of future trends.?

## Social policy. White Paper

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The committee members adopted (by a very wide majority) the draft report setting out the principles behind the Union's social policy: \* the fight against unemployment should be the Union's priority objective; \* the European social model should be based on a social market economy and standards to prevent unfair competition in the social area should therefore be introduced; \* binding legislative provisions applicable at Community level in the social area should be introduced in order to work towards real social Union. The report also pointed out that legislation is still the best way of anchoring social rights in substantive law (especially by making use of all the possibilities offered by the agreement on social policy in the TEU) in order to improve conditions in employment, vocational training and equal opportunities between men and women in Europe. Finally, the report stressed the need to process the legislative proposals in the social area pending before the Council at 1 January 1995.?

## Social policy. White Paper

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on this White Paper, the purpose of which is to define the main principles behind the Union's social policy. In its resolution, Parliament called first and foremost for the fight against unemployment to be the Community's number one objective and reiterated the need for greater flexibility in national and European social policy in order to meet the new challenges of the labour market. It also reaffirmed its commitment to the European social model and felt that a bedrock of binding legislative provisions applicable at European level was the best way of achieving social Union. At the same time, Parliament commented on some of the major issues in the

White Paper: . action instruments: the European Parliament called on the Commission to make use of the potential of the agreement on social policy (between the 11) and recommended that it implement the Community acquis in this area by paying greater attention to citizens' complaints and, where necessary, by applying the proper infringement procedures where Member States failed to comply with Community legislation; . employment: Parliament urged the Commission to develop the EURES system and to strengthen its relations with the social partners. It also called for a new programme to provide social support for workers taking advantage of free movement (language training, installation and reinstallation allowances); . vocational training: the European Parliament supported the Commission's policy in this area and, more importantly, its intention to involve the social partners in defining a European collective agreement on continuing training; . legislation: it called on the Council to process all the legislative procedures pending at 1 January 1995 and on the Commission to table proposals designed to guarantee equal opportunities, parental leave, voluntary job-sharing (in a framework directive), individual redundancies, atypical work and the right of consultation in enterprises with fewer than 50 employees and of frontier workers and called for a new action programme on health and safety in the workplace; . equal opportunities: it called for the Commission to table legislative texts quickly and to develop measures to guarantee equal opportunities; . trade union freedom and role of the social partners: it reiterated its belief in the European social model and therefore stressed the importance which it attached to the intervention of the social partners. Everything should be done to guarantee trade union freedom and collective negotiation at all levels.?