


Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1994/2161(INI)	Procedure completed
World Trade Organisation WTO		
Subject 6.20.01 Agreements and relations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO)		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RELA External Economic Relations		22/11/1994
		PPE KITTELMANN Peter	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development		16/04/1996
	PSE GÖRLACH Willi		
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		31/01/1996
		PSE RANDZIO-PLATH Christa	
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		21/11/1995
		ELDR PIMENTA Carlos	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	General Affairs	1958	28/10/1996
	General Affairs	1943	16/07/1996
	General Affairs	1827	06/02/1995

Key events			
05/10/1994	Non-legislative basic document published	B4-0170/1994	
14/11/1994	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
06/02/1995	Debate in Council	1827	
16/07/1996	Debate in Council	1943	
10/10/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
10/10/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0320/1996	
28/10/1996	Debate in Council	1958	
13/11/1996	Debate in Parliament		

			
13/11/1996	Decision by Parliament	T4-0595/1996	Summary
13/11/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
02/12/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1994/2161(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RELA/4/06125

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		B4-0170/1994	05/10/1994	EP	
Document attached to the procedure		COM(1996)0053	14/02/1996	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(1996)0284	18/06/1996	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0320/1996 OJ C 362 02.12.1996, p. 0004	10/10/1996	EP	
Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report		CES1263/1996 OJ C 056 24.02.1997, p. 0047	31/10/1996	ESC	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0595/1996 OJ C 362 02.12.1996, p. 0095-0152	13/11/1996	EP	Summary
Committee of the Regions: opinion		CDR0353/1996 OJ C 116 14.04.1997, p. 0026	15/01/1997	CofR	

World Trade Organisation WTO

OBJECTIVE: to present an initial analysis of the priorities of the European Union in connection with immediate measures to open the markets, negotiations under way and the debate on the future programme of the WTO. This analysis will be refined and developed to take account of the reactions of the Member States, the European Parliament, organizations of enterprises, consumers etc. and third countries. CONTENT: the Commission attempts in this communication to define available objectives and instruments with a view to developing a general strategy to give Community enterprises access to the market. It points out that while the Community has always endeavoured to eliminate trade barriers through bilateral or multilateral negotiations, new obstacles have arisen with the introduction of new commercial rules. In order to overcome these obstacles, the Community needs to: - adopt a more systematic, coherent and preventive approach by negotiating and applying existing commercial conventions and rules; - ensure that its commercial policy concentrates on opening third country markets. The Commission therefore proposes an overall strategy for opening the markets which includes the following objectives: . the Community's trading partners must duly comply with and conform to the obligations pursuant to WTO agreements, as the Community does; . the Community's commercial policy must concentrate on opening the market and using existing instruments; . the Community must attack other barriers to economic flows, be they commercial barriers or investment barriers which do not qualify as "commercial" barriers in the traditional sense (discriminatory national legislation, failure to apply national competition rules etc.); . companies must be better informed of the potential offered by existing instruments so that they can obtain reductions in tariff barriers and are better placed to fight unfair competition. The Community has two tools to achieve these objectives: - multilateral negotiation within the WTO (but not solely); - the bilateral level, either in the form of general or sectoral bilateral negotiations or when agreements to open markets or free trade agreements are negotiated with third countries or regional groupings of countries. These 2 instruments should enable the market access strategy to pursue the following objectives: - at the bilateral level: . to identify obstacles to market access; . to define priority actions needed; . to identify the most appropriate means of eliminating these obstacles; . to improve the coherence of the multilateral and bilateral approaches used on certain markets; . to coordinate these actions with other actions by the Community and the Member States; - at the multilateral level: . to consolidate the acquis of the Uruguay Round and insist that all signatories honour their commitments to the letter; . to identify the means of promoting the opening of the markets; . to extend multilateral negotiations to new areas; . to meet new challenges resulting from the globalization of the economy. The idea put forward by the Commission (which proposes a precise timetable of actions in its communication) is not so much to propose a fundamental change in the

Community's current objectives but to make more systematic and coordinated use of existing resources. Collaboration needs to be strengthened between the EU and the WTO, which the Commission considers to be the mainstay of an open trade system, and priority needs to be given during WTO negotiations to matters concerning European enterprises (especially during the ministerial meeting in Singapore in December 1996 or during preparations for the WTO working programme between now and the year 2000).?

World Trade Organisation WTO

OBJECTIVE: this communication deals with the international aspects of competition. It is designed to consider whether public international law, in particular the WTO, needs to be supplemented by a specific framework geared to promoting the application of competition law.

CONTENTS: the Commission is persuaded that intensified multilateral action will make it possible to extend to the whole world the advantages of increased convergence and an improvement in competition rules and their application. With that in mind, it suggests that the Council adopt the following conclusions: - the Community must prepare its position for the WTO ministerial meeting in Singapore in December 1996; the WTO should set up a working group mandated to begin exploratory work, from 1997, on developing an international framework of competition rules; - that framework could include the following: an undertaking on the part of all the countries to adopt enforceable national competition rules and, in the case of a limited number of them, to set in place an instrument facilitating the exchange of information between the responsible authorities, a mechanism making it possible to call for action to be taken on foreign markets and intergovernmental machinery for the settlement of disputes; - European undertakings should be consulted and associated appropriately as progress is achieved in this area; - the Community must indicate the path to follow, seek to obtain international consensus and encourage the other members of the WTO to support multilateral efforts in this area; - the OECD and UNCTAD must be asked to continue their work on trade and competition in the light of developments within the WTO. ?

World Trade Organisation WTO

The Committee on External Economic Relations adopted the KITTELMANN report on the World Trade Organization (WTO). The resolution attached to it emphasizes the key role of the WTO in the application of the rules of the multilateral system of the trade in goods and services, the implementation of the results of the Uruguay Round and improvements to the system of international trade. The committee was concerned that insufficient account was taken of the specific interests of developing countries. However, it welcomed the introduction of the new procedure for solving litigation and called on the European Commission to ensure that embargo measures imposed by the United States on Cuba, Iran and Libya were re-examined within the WTO. It emphasized the need in this respect to institute democratic scrutiny of the activities of the WTO through parliamentary bodies. The IGC was called on to amend the Treaty, especially Article 113 (commercial policy) so that the Commission was the only EU representative at WTO negotiations. The committee stated that it trusted that the ministerial conference of the WTO would create the conditions needed to complete negotiations on the deregulation of the telecommunications market and prepare the negotiations planned for the year 2000, especially on agricultural products and services. The committee hoped that relations between environmental and commercial policy would be clearly defined. The setting of minimum social standards, especially the freedom of trade union action and the ban on forced labour and child labour, were also matters which needed to be included on the agenda for the ministerial conference. Finally, the Singapore conference would need to prepare negotiations with a view to deregulating direct international investment and adopting international rules on competition policy.?

World Trade Organisation WTO

The Committee supports the strategy of the Commission to achieve better access to third country markets, in order to promote European exports and thereby create more jobs in Europe. The Committee also asks for the complete application of the results of the GATT-Uruguay Round. Among the issues on the "new trade agenda" for the WTO, the Economic and Social Committee puts a particular emphasis on the future debate on trade and competition policy. The priority for WTO negotiations in this field should be to strengthen the world trading system and enhance competition through the establishment of a multilateral policy framework which aims at avoiding potential conflicts between trade and competition policy objectives. The inclusion of labour standards in international trade agreements will give the international Community the instrument to force countries to respect widely accepted labour standards and the Economic and Social Committee favours the inclusion of labour standards in international trade agreements in the framework of the WTO.?

World Trade Organisation WTO

Adopting the report by Mr Peter KITTELMANN (PPE, D) on the World Trade Organization (WTO), the European Parliament emphasized the key role of the WTO in the application of the rules of the multilateral system of the trade in goods and services, the implementation of the results of the Uruguay Round and improvements to the system of international trade. The European Parliament was concerned that insufficient account was taken of the specific interests of developing countries. However, it welcomed the introduction of the new arbitration procedure and called on the European Commission to ensure that embargo measures imposed by the United States on Cuba, Iran and Libya were re-examined within the WTO. It emphasized the need in this respect to institute democratic scrutiny of the activities of the WTO through parliamentary bodies. The IGC was called on to amend the Treaty, especially Article 113 (commercial policy) so that the Commission was the only EU representative at WTO negotiations and it was hoped that the ministerial conference of the WTO would create the conditions needed to complete negotiations on the deregulation of the telecommunications market and prepare the negotiations planned for the year 2000, especially on agricultural products and services. The European Parliament trusted that relations between environmental and commercial policy would be clearly defined. The setting of minimum social standards, especially the freedom of trade union action and the ban on forced labour and child labour, were also matters which needed to be included on the agenda for the ministerial conference. Finally, the Singapore conference would need to prepare negotiations with a view to deregulating direct international investment and adopting international rules on competition policy.?

