Basic information

1994/2201(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Baltic Sea region: guidelines for a Union approach in the Baltic region **Subject** 6.40.02.02 Relations with northern Europe and the Baltic States **Geographical area** Baltic Sea area	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	AF UGGLAS Margaretha (PPE)	02/02/1995

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
RELA External Economic Relations	SCHWAIGER Konrad K. (PPE)	25/01/1995
REGI Regional Policy	BEREND Rolf (PPE)	24/05/1995

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	1847	1995-05-29

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
25/10/1994	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(1994)1747	Summary
20/01/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
29/05/1995	Debate in Council		Summary
22/06/1995	Vote in committee		Summary
22/06/1995	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0158/1995	
13/07/1995	Debate in Parliament		
14/07/1995	End of procedure in Parliament		

25/09/1995	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1994/2201(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	AFET/4/06227

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0158/1995 OJ C 249 25.09.1995, p. 0004	22/06/1995	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0377/1995 OJ C 249 25.09.1995, p. 0199-0215	14/07/1995	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	SEC(1994)1747	25/10/1994	Summary

Baltic Sea region: guidelines for a Union approach in the Baltic region

1994/2201(COS) - 29/05/1995

The Council discussed the European Union’s policy towards the Baltic Sea region and the Baltic states . It adopted the following conclusions concerning the European Union’s policy towards the Baltic Sea region: 1. The Council notes with satisfaction the Commission communication on guidelines for a European Union policy towards the Baltic Sea region. It points out that the European Union has a genuine interest in contributing to the political stability and prosperity of the region, an interest recently reflected in the Stability Pact initiative. 2. The Baltic Sea region has taken on increasing importance for the European Union as a result of the accession of two new Member States with Baltic coasts, the entry into force of free - trade agreements and the signing of Association Agreements with the three Baltic states, to which the pre--accession strategy decided on by the European Council in Essen will thus be applicable. These new links between the Union and the Baltic Sea region come on top of those already arising from the presence of Member States with Baltic coasts, the relations entered into with Norway under the European Economic Area, the Association Agreement with Poland and the signing in 1994 of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the Russian Federation . Political cooperation and dialogue 3. The European Union is uniquely placed to contribute to the development and stability of the region on account of the ties it has built up with the Baltic Sea states, which result in the establishment of many channels for political dialogue. 4. The structured dialogue established with the associated states provides an important framework in this field. The Baltic states , with which a political dialogue has been conducted under the Joint Declaration of 11 May 1992, are in future to participate in that structured dialogue. The Association Agreements and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Russia provide for the establishment of a bilateral framework for political dialogue. A dialogue is also being engaged in with Norway under the European Economic Area. Consistent use will need to be made of these various channels with the aim of promoting stability and security in the region. 5. The adoption of the Stability Pact on 20 and 21 March 1995 at the Paris Conference and its transfer to the OSCE represent the successful culmination of joint action by the Union under the CFSP. This initiative should help encourage the putting into practice of the principles and undertakings laid down at the United Nations, the OSCE and the Council of Europe. The European Union, whose policy towards the Baltic Sea region

will contribute to the achievement of the Stability Pact’s objectives, in particular to the constructive development of Russian--Baltic relations, will continue to keep a close watch on the further progress of that process, which comes under the OSCE and which could give rise to the continuation of work carried out in the context of the regional round tables. 6. Permanent consultation between Baltic Sea states within the Council of the Baltic Sea states (CBSS) is also highly important, as borne out by initiatives such as the appointment of a Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. Besides some Union Member States, the CBSS includes a number of states with which the Union maintains close links: associated states, Norway and the Russian Federation . The Council calls on the Commission to submit to it proposals regarding the role that the Commission may come to play, within its sphere of competence, in the CBSS. Economic cooperation 7. Through strong economic growth and trade liberalisation, the Baltic Sea region will offer fresh opportunities for trade and investment. The further integration of the region into the European and the global economy is in line with the Union ’s interests. It is with this in mind that the Union should contribute to the development of trade in the region and direct its assistance. 8. The Council reaffirms the European Union’s wish to promote the development of trade in the region. The Union is contributing to this through its various Agreements with the Baltic Sea states, which make provision, each under its own particular procedures, for the reduction or elimination of trade barriers. The Union will also endeavour to encourage initiatives to expand trade between Baltic Sea states that are not members of the Union, by providing suitable assistance, e.g. in the customs field. 9. The Council notes that assistance to the region will achieve greater consistency if aid programmes are planned and developed in the light of the regional context and if a consensus can be found on certain priorities. In this respect the Council highlights the importance of greater coordination of existing bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes, especially, bearing in mind their respective roles, under the G-24 and under the Council of the Baltic Sea States, a particularly appropriate forum for Baltic Sea regional cooperation. In accordance with the Essen European Council conclusions, particularly those on intra--regional cooperation and trans--European networks, the European Union will ensure that its own action makes a complementary contribution to the implementation of regional cooperation and cross--border projects and projects to foster good neighbourliness in the Baltic Sea region. Assistance provided should take due account, in accordance with the specific rules of each instrument, of the following priorities: trade, infrastructure, including transport, investment, the environment, energy and nuclear safety, education, and development of the activities of local communities and of the private sector. 10. The Council requests the Commission to submit to it in the second half of 1995 a report on the progress of and practical prospects for cooperation in the Baltic Sea region.

Baltic Sea region: guidelines for a Union approach in the Baltic region

1994/2201(COS) - 25/10/1994 - Non-legislative basic document

This Commission communication deals with the main aspects of the European Union's Baltic policy. It is a strategic document defining the Community's main priorities in this region (viz. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). The main purpose of this communication is to clarify Community policy vis-à-vis the Baltic countries, paying particular attention to the poorest regions in the area. It contains a number of thoughts on how regional political and economic cooperation could be developed to complement bilateral relations. It explores a number of avenues for gradually liberalizing trade in the region as a whole and identifies the sectors and projects for which a regional approach is a better way of improving coherence and efficiency than a bilateral approach. The measures proposed in this communication do not require any additional funds. They could be financed from existing budgetary lines subject, in certain cases, to reallocation or reorientation. Measures proposed: the Commission calls on the Council to approve the guidelines set out in this document by adopting a series of specific measures: - strengthening political dialogue with the Baltic states, within a multilateral framework, on questions of common interest, in order to promote stability and security in the Baltic Sea region; - taking account of problems relating to stability and security in the Baltic Sea region within the framework of political dialogue between the Union and Russia; - calling on the Commission to continue taking an active part in the work of the Council of Baltic Sea States (CBSS) as a full member; - stepping up the coordination of existing bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes for the region; - giving priority to infrastructures and the environment, promoting investment and re-orientating funding so that the Structural Funds, PHARE and TACIS for the benefit of the region can be used in a complementary manner within the framework of regional projects; - supporting action by economic operators in the region at sub-regional, local and private level; - encouraging regional and sub-regional cooperation for the benefit of the regions of Russia along the Baltic Sea.

Baltic Sea region: guidelines for a Union approach in the Baltic region

1994/2201(COS) - 14/07/1995 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs af UGGLAS (PPE, S), Parliament called for EC aid to promote sustainable development in the Baltic Sea and the surrounding area. This region should indeed be considered fully as part of the new Europe and the Community should be promoting stability, democracy, economic, social and ecological development and respect for the rule of law in the area in question. Parliament stressed the importance of promoting regional cooperation and the gradual creation of a pan-European free-trade zone, as provided for in the new European agreements concluded with the three Baltic States. Similarly, it called for the entire Baltic Sea region to be included in the trans-European network programme and for the development of investment in that particular zone. Parliament also insisted that a significant portion of the aid in question be directed towards the clean-up of the Baltic Sea. Programmes such as LIFE, PHARE and TACIS should provide more substantial aid for this purpose. Parliament also felt that it was vital for the European Community to cooperate in establishing nuclear safety in this region and in improving the access of countries bordering eastern Europe to cleaner and safer energy sources. As regards cultural heritage, Parliament called on the Community to promote cultural exchanges in this region (including the media sector). As far as the safety of citizens was concerned, Parliament insisted that action be taken to combat smuggling and crime and to control the drugs problem. In the area of security, Parliament felt that it was essential to continue the dialogue initiated by the Stability Pact and stressed the absolute importance of ensuring the integration of minority groups living in these States (particularly the Russian-speaking populations). It called on all the Baltic Sea States to join the European Convention on Human Rights and to guarantee fundamental liberties, including those of minority groups. Finally, it approved the accession of Member States and associated countries to all the security structures to which the other Members of the EU already belonged, while recognizing each nation's right to decide on its own security policy. As regards regional cooperation, Parliament was of the opinion that economic cooperation had to have a solid regional foundation and for this reason called for the creation of an interregional development programme. Finally, at international level, Parliament was in favour of the Community establishing diplomatic representatives in this region in order to promote political dialogue and to give greater recognition to the role of the CBSS (Council of the Baltic Sea States) and the Euro-Arctic Council of the Barents Sea.