Basic information

1995/2302(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Humanitarian aid to the former Yugoslavia: prospects and guidelines **Subject** 6.40.03 Relations with South-East Europe and the Balkans **Geographical area** Yugoslavia, Federal Republic - 01/2003	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	ALAVANOS Alexandros (GUE/NGL)	20/12/1995

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	GIANSILY Jean-Antoine (UPE)	24/01/1996
RELA External Economic Relations	FERRER Concepció (PPE)	19/12/1995
DEVE Development and Cooperation	MAIJ-WEGGEN Hanja (PPE)	20/12/1995

Council of the European Union

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/11/1995	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1995)0564	Summary
11/12/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
28/05/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
28/05/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0174/1996	
19/06/1996	Debate in Parliament		
20/06/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		

08/07/1996	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1995/2302(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/4/07297

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0174/1996 OJ C 198 08.07.1996, p. 0004	28/05/1996	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0352/1996 OJ C 198 08.07.1996, p. 0161-0188	20/06/1996	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1995)0564	17/11/1995	Summary

Humanitarian aid to the former Yugoslavia: prospects and guidelines

1995/2302(COS) - 20/06/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Alexandros ALAVANOS (GUE/NGL, EL) on humanitarian aid to former Yugoslavia, the European Parliament noted that the European Union was the most important provider of aid in this region and it therefore felt that the Community should be more widely responsible for the deployment of funds. While insisting that, where humanitarian aid was concerned, emphasis needed to be placed on emergency help (supplies of food, medical equipment etc.), it stressed that action was also needed to remove mines. While considering that this aid was indispensable to the people who were the victims of war and should continue until they were able to organize their own lives using their own resources, it drew attention to the waves of refugees from regions changing administrative authorities under the Dayton agreements (3.6 million refugees and displaced persons within former Yugoslavia and 850,000 refugees elsewhere in Europe). Parliament stressed in particular that: - this humanitarian aid must reach those in distress and must not be diverted to local authorities or granted for projects subject to reconstruction aid; - aid was not, under any circumstances, an alternative to political commitment on the part of the European Union vis-à-vis former Yugoslavia. Consequently, the European Union should undertake, over and above the mandate granted to IFOR, to safeguard minorities, protect refugees wishing to return home and develop the civil society; - the European Union should use its influence to ensure that the former warring factions grant refugee status to all persons who had been forced to leave their homes; - the Member States of the European Union which had received refugees from former Yugoslavia should implement a plan of gradual repatriation, bearing in mind that mixed couples often do not wish to settle down in states in which multi-ethnicity is less prominent than before. Given these difficulties, repatriation should not be hurried and should take place in consultation with the HCR. Parliament believed that the European Union should not contribute to new ethnic segregation but, on the contrary, should help to safeguard security and the protection of multi-cultural communities. Humanitarian aid should also: - in the short term: ensure that people survive in conditions of security and dignity; - in the medium term: enable the people concerned to regain a certain degree of self-sufficiency (supplies of seed, fertilizer, machinery, aid for SMEs, restoration of school and hospital services); - facilitate the transition from emergency aid to reconstruction aid, mainly by restoring physical infrastructures; - make a positive contribution to the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons to their place of origin; - finance programmes in the health, medical and surgical sectors and

encourage the return of medical personnel; - set up aid programmes for people with war wounds and supply them with prostheses so that, where possible, they can resume their professional activities; - provide psychological support and reintegration programmes for victims of ethnic cleansing; - provide programmes of social aid, psychological support and training for war orphans, single parent families and women who have been victim to violence; - pay special attention to the 300,000 soldiers and young people in need of psychological support and counselling in order to prepare for normal life in the new multi-cultural society. Finally, with regard to the fate of the 27,000 missing persons, the European Parliament called for immediate, coordinated, transparent action to obtain information. It also called for an independent inquiry to be started without delay on events which took place during the fall of Srebenica and the disappearance of the citizens of the region. It emphasized the prime importance of the role of NGOs in managing humanitarian aid and called for proper coordination of their action. The Commission should, in particular, support the creation of NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina which reflect the views of the three communities, so that a multi-ethnic society based on tolerance and secular European values can re-emerge.

Humanitarian aid to the former Yugoslavia: prospects and guidelines

1995/2302(COS) - 17/11/1995 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: to define the main guidelines and prospects for EU humanitarian aid to the former Yugoslavia during the emergency phase (1995-1996 winter) and for the period following that phase. SUBSTANCE: the Commission stresses that the Community is the principal financial backer of humanitarian aid in this region, having provided ECU 1 600 million (with ECHO contributing more than ECU 1 000 million), in other words 66% of the total aid provided since the beginning of the crisis, and points out that this aid will have to continue well beyond 1996, due in particular to the extremely large number of displaced persons and refugees. Nevertheless, humanitarian measures will have to be adapted to meet the urgent priorities that have arisen due to the winter conditions and the movements of the population as well as changes resulting from the peace process. In the short term (1995-1996 winter), the priority is to ensure the survival of the people: continuing to provide food aid, pursuing essential programmes in the health and medical fields and psycho-social programmes, winter clothing, fuel and support for minimum emergency rehabilitation activities (shelters for refugees). In the medium term, it is important to reduce people's dependence on humanitarian aid: there must be a "continuum" between the emergency phase and the rehabilitation/reconstruction phase so as to assist displaced persons as best possible: social reintegration, water and electricity rehabilitation, providing primary healthcare. As regards the repatriation of displaced persons, the Commission emphasises that repatriation must be voluntary but that no methodical repatriation operation can be planned at this stage given the many problems that are yet to be solved (priority law, application of the Geneva Convention on voluntary returns, and so on). Furthermore, although humanitarian aid must not be subjected to political conditions, the Commission points out that aid must firstly be allocated to those most in need of it in accordance with each region's requirements. In this respect, the Union should continue to demand complete freedom of access to humanitarian aid. With regard to the coordination of aid, the Commission points to the role of the High Commissioner for Refugees, whose commitment is vital. It also states that the Community's existing task force, based in Zagreb, should be restructured (simplification and rationalisation of aid structures) but that ECHO should continue to monitor on the ground. Finally, as regards funding, the Commission points out that allocations for 1996 appear to be insufficient: the 1996 budget sets aside ECU 112 million whilst a total of ECU 230 million was allocated in 1995. Given the large number of refugees/displaced persons requiring assistance, the appropriations set aside for humanitarian aid should at the very least be equivalent to those allocated in 1995.