Basic information

1996/0087(CNS) CNS - Consultation procedure Decision	Procedure completed
Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000 **Subject** 3.45.02 Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), craft industries	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	THYSSEN Marianne (PPE)	20/05/1996

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	GIANSILY Jean-Antoine (UPE)	22/04/1996
ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy	FERBER Markus (PPE)	23/04/1996
JURI Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		
FEMM Women's Rights	VAN DIJK Nel B.M. (V)	02/07/1996

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Environment	1978	1996-12-09
Industry	1962	1996-11-14
Industry	1926	1996-05-20
Industry	1913	1996-03-28

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
20/03/1996	Legislative proposal published	COM(1996)0098	Summary

28/03/1996	Debate in Council		
18/04/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
09/07/1996	Vote in committee		Summary
09/07/1996	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading	A4-0249/1996	
18/09/1996	Debate in Parliament		
14/11/1996	Modified legislative proposal published	COM(1996)0591	Summary
09/12/1996	Act adopted by Council after consultation of Parliament		
09/12/1996	End of procedure in Parliament		
10/01/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1996/0087(CNS)
Procedure type	CNS - Consultation procedure
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Legal basis	EC Treaty (before Amsterdam) E 130
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/4/07780

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A4-0249/1996 OJ C 277 23.09.1996, p. 0004	09/07/1996	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T4-0465/1996 OJ C 320 28.10.1996, p. 0126-0153	19/09/1996	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1996)0098 OJ C 156 31.05.1996, p. 0005	20/03/1996	Summary
Modified legislative proposal	COM(1996)0591 OJ C 061 27.02.1997, p. 0019	14/11/1996	Summary
Follow-up document	COM(2001)0098	01/03/2001	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0877/1996 OJ C 295 07.10.1996, p. 0006	10/07/1996	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0211/1996 OJ C 034 03.02.1997, p. 0034	19/09/1996	

Additional information

Source	Document	Date
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act

Decision 1997/0015
OJ L 006 10.01.1997, p. 0025 Summary

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 01/03/2001 - Follow-up document

This report on the activities of the European Union for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is drawn up in accordance with the Council Decision on the Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs. This Decision provides for the Commission to submit to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions a two-yearly report on the progress achieved in taking SMEs into account in all Community policies and programmes, following its coordination action. This is the fifth report of this type. It reports on the latest developments that have occurred since the adoption of the previous report at the end of 1997 and outlines future prospects. The report is broken down into three main chapters: the first one deals with improving the framework conditions for SMEs, the second one with programmes and instruments with a particular financial impact on support for SMEs and the third with enlargement, pre-accession and cooperation with non-member countries. The conclusion describes the development of the process of increasingly taking SMEs into account in Community policies and programmes. In its conclusions, the report shows that the priority policy in favour of SMEs and the development of an entrepreneurial Europe confirms. It should also be noted that the taking into account of the participaton of the Community programmes has increased in the past years. There remains however, to efforts to be made on the issue so of the evaluation of the imapct of policy on the development of SMEs. If the Community contribution to the development of essentials in order to maximise the potential of competition, growth, innovation and the work of the SME. The report clearly shows that during the implementation of the Third Multiannual programme for the SMEs, enterprise policy, in particular in the support of the SME, has become an integral part of the the broad policy lines of the Union. A positive evolution similar to this is also observed in the Member States. This report describes the aims of the Integrated Programme for SMEs, the framework for coordinating the various EU initiatives in support of SMEs taken under enterprose policy or other Community policies or under the Concerted Actions. It demonstrates that the SME dimension is now an integral part of Community policies and has an impact on them. It also shows that SMEs are a priority in many programmes and that soem of them provide for special SME measures. The developments since the end of 1997 show that SMEs are at the centre of the European policy-making. The conclusions of this report also show that SME participation in Community programmes is improving in general.

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 09/12/1996 - Final act

OBJECTIVE : to adopt for a period of four years (1997-2000) a third action programme for SMEs in the European Union. COMMUNITY MEASURE : Council Decision 97/15/EC on a Third Multiannual Programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the European Union. SUBSTANCE : The Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs (1997-2000) has the following objectives: 1. To simplify and improve the administrative and regulatory business environment: ensuring consideration of the interests of SMEs in the various Community initiatives and policies (regional policy, research,

environmental protection); simplification of legislation; transparency; spread of best practice; improvement of the framework for transnational operations of SMEs; 2. To improve the financial environment for enterprises: access to loans and risk capital; reducing late payment problems; development of specific financial instruments; stimulating the development of capital markets for fast-growing SMEs; 3. To help SMEs to internationalize their strategies through better information and cooperation networks: access by SMEs to the information society; Euro-Info Centres; business search networks; partnership programmes; subcontracting partnerships; access to new markets and internationalization of SMEs; 4. To enhance SME competitiveness and improve access to research, innovation and training: increasing the innovative potential of SMEs; managerial training; adaptation to environmental requirements; 5. To promote entrepreneurship and support special target groups: business culture and entrepreneurship; craft and small enterprises; enterprises in commerce and distributive trades; women; young entrepreneurs; enterprises owned by minorities; 6. Policy development and improvement of knowledge about SMEs. The financial reference for implementation of the programme totals ECU 127 million for the whole of the period. DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE : from 1 January 1997 to 31 December 2000.

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 20/05/1996

The Council reached broad agreement on the text of the draft Decision. However, the question as regards the funding of its implementation remained unresolved, mainly because Parliament had yet to submit its opinion. The Council charged the Permanent Representatives Committee with the task of examining the introduction (recitals) and annexes (which contained a list of concrete measures aimed at achieving the Programme objectives) with a view to finalising the entire text in the light of the opinions of Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 19/09/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Marianne THYSSEN (PPE, B), Parliament approved the Third Multiannual Programme for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) while calling for its extension to craft enterprises. The EP also called for measures to promote access of SMEs to the information society and to allow them full participation in the European social dialogue. It sought to stimulate the development of and access to venture capital and the starting up of SMEs through favourable tax provisions. Finally, the EP expressed the hope that the participation of employees in SMEs would be stimulated and that environment-friendly production and distribution schemes would be encouraged.

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 20/03/1996 - Legislative proposal

OBJECTIVE: The proposal for a Council decision aims to establish a third action programme for SMEs in the European Union for a period of four years (1997-2000). SUBSTANCE: The third multi-annual programme for SMEs has the following priority objectives: 1. To simplify and improve the administrative and regulatory business environment: - to ensure consideration of the interests of SMEs in the various Community initiatives and policies (regional policy, research, environmental protection); - to simplify and improve Community legislation (to reduce the administrative burden and the cost of adjusting to legislation); - to increase transparency and the spread of best practices on simplifying and improving the administrative and regulatory environment (transfer of businesses, retention of title); - to improve the framework for trans-national operations of SMEs (settlement procedures for trans-national disputes, promotion of appropriate legal structures); 2. To improve the financial environment for enterprises: - to improve access to loan financing; - to reduce late payment problems (regular monitoring of the Commission's 1995 recommendation); - to facilitate the development of specific financial instruments (factoring and credit insurance); - to stimulate the development of European capital markets for fast-growing SMEs (including EASDAQ); 3. To help SMEs to Europeanize and internationalize their strategies through better information services: - to improve information of SMEs, in particular through Euro Info-Centres (EICs) which the Commission wishes to transform into 'first-stop shops', directing each request to the relevant service provider; - to provide pro-active information in particular on the markets and the introduction of the single currency; - to improve the promotion of SME policy actions (information campaigns); - to promote cooperation through business search networks (improving the BC-NET and BRE); - to promote direct contacts through partnership programmes (Europartenariat and Interprise programmes); - to develop sub-contracting partnerships; - to promote access to new markets and the internationalization of SMEs (pilot projects and innovative approaches); 4. To enhance SME competitiveness and improve their access to research, innovation and training: - to increase the innovative potential of SMEs and facilitate their access to the information society; - to stimulate managerial training; - to adapt to environmental requirements; 5. Promoting of entrepreneurship and special target groups; - business culture and entrepreneurship (exchange of best practice); - craft and small enterprises; - enterprises in commerce and distributive trades; - women and young entrepreneurs; enterprises owned by minorities. In addition, the aim is to improve public information and consultation on policy to promote businesses (improve statistics, data-bases etc...).

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 10/07/1996 - Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report

Article 3 of the draft Council Decision contains a definition of the subsidiarity principle in the sense that it provides that the Commission shall take measures only in so far as they cannot be better achieved by the Member States. The multiannual programme now under consideration is not the only EU policy instrument to promote the establishment and development of SMEs. This policy must be at the heart of the EU's operational and legislative programmes, and in particular the internal market, the structural instruments, the Leonardo and Socrates education and training programmes, R&D and innovation, the financing instruments, particularly the EIB and the development of the information society. It is therefore important that, in addition to the third multiannual programme, other EU policies take greater account of this priority. The Committee stresses the importance of the simplification and improvement of Community legislation and the exchange of best practices and expects to see concrete results in terms of an improved business climate for SMEs in the short term. The Committee in particular emphasizes the importance of an efficient system of cost-benefit analyses. In its Opinion of 6 July 1994, the ESC looked in detail at the European Commission's Communication on the financing of SMEs. Many of the problems identified at that time still exist and need to be solved more and more urgently. The Committee has also noted with approval the Commission Communication on the development of capital markets for fast-growing small and medium-sized enterprises (EASDAQ = European Association of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotation). The Committee endorses the proposal to establish a new guarantee instrument (ELISE = European Loan Insurance Scheme for Employment) to help employment - creating SMEs to obtain loans. The Multiannual Programme also covers actions for the craft sector, commerce, the distributive trades and specific target groups such as women and young entrepreneurs. The Committee is pleased that the financial resources made available for these target groups are significantly larger than in previous years.

Small and medium-sized enterprises SMEs in the European Union: 3rd multiannual programme 1997-2000

1996/0087(CNS) - 14/11/1996 - Modified legislative proposal

The modified Commission proposal concerning a Third Multiannual Programme for SMEs (1997-2000) incorporates several amendments adopted by Parliament. The Commission believes, however, that a number of EP amendments do not relate to enterprise policy, but to other Community policies (such as social policy, fiscal policy, competition policy, economic and monetary union, and financial instruments in favour of SMEs). These amendments fit more appropriately in the context of the Commission's Integrated Programme for SMEs and have been addressed in the Commission's communication which updates and develops its Integrated Programme (COM(96)329 final).