Basic information

1996/2076(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Former Yugoslavia: prospects for developping regional cooperation **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	COHN-BENDIT Daniel (V)	11/06/1996

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	GIANSILY Jean-Antoine (UPE)	04/06/1996
RELA External Economic Relations	WIERSMA Jan Marinus (PSE)	28/01/1997

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	1958	1996-10-28

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
14/02/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	SEC(1996)0252	Summary
20/05/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
28/10/1996	Debate in Council		
07/04/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
07/04/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0127/1997	
14/05/1997	Debate in Parliament		
15/05/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		

02/06/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1996/2076(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/4/07809

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0127/1997 OJ C 150 19.05.1997, p. 0002	07/04/1997	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0241/1997 OJ C 167 02.06.1997, p. 0118-0143	15/05/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	SEC(1996)0252	14/02/1996	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0476	02/10/1996	Summary

Former Yugoslavia: prospects for developping regional cooperation

1996/2076(COS) - 02/10/1996 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: The report seeks to establish common principles for future contractual relations with the countries of the former Yugoslavia.
SUBSTANCE: Following the Council meeting of 26 February 1996, the Community defined a regional approach to the conclusion of agreements with the countries of the former Yugoslavia designed essentially to stabilize the political situation in these countries and encourage their economic development. The agreements should be seen as a substantial incentive to reconciliation among these countries and should encourage regional cooperation. The conditions and common principles which should guide the conclusion of agreements with Bosnia, Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are as follows: - Conditions: the agreements should include clear political and economic conditions, in particular respect for human rights and minorities, the right to return of displaced persons and refugees, democratic institutions, political and economic reform, readiness to establish open and cooperative relations between these countries, full compliance with the terms of the Dayton agreement and, with regard to Yugoslavia, the granting of a large degree of autonomy to Kosovo. The Council's demands on the former Yugoslavia also include: . mutual recognition among all the states of the former Federation, . full cooperation with the International War Crimes Tribunal, . agreement among all States of the former Yugoslavia on matters of succession (NB these conditions do not apply to humanitarian aid). - Common principles: . type of agreement: cooperation agreements including economic clauses going beyond the provisions of traditional agreements of this kind. With regard to long-term association with the EU, this will entail a higher level of economic maturity and a much clearer political dimension, particularly at regional level; . content of agreements: this will not necessarily be the same for the three countries, since their level of economic development may differ. Nevertheless, the agreements will include some common structural elements: - encouragement of regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations, - economic cooperation: this will be linked to the parties'

readiness to cooperate with their neighbours and will entail a substantial regional cooperation component (in particular, customs cooperation and development of common infrastructures), - cross-border cooperation: action could be taken within the framework of PHARE (PHARE-INTERREG II, multinational programmes, CREDO), - commitment by the countries to cooperate with each other in areas such as energy, telecommunications, transport, research, technology, agriculture, tourism, health, environment, provision of services and free movement of persons, - trade concessions: the Community will offer concessions along the lines of the autonomous import regime for the republics of the former Yugoslavia applied since 1992, but will be made conditional on the willingness of the three recipient states to negotiate reciprocal facilities with their partners, - political dialogue: in a separate joint declaration, the countries would undertake to respect human rights, minority rights and democratic principles, as well as the values embodied in the relevant international conventions,which were violated during the war. The dialogue would be held in a sub-regional format, allowing the countries concerned to meet directly, - evolutionary clause: this clause, which is essential for the future of bilateral relations with the EU, should not, however, encourage these countries to apply for accession prematurely. Its main aim is to spell out the essential preconditions for further development of relations with the Union (in particular, compliance with peace agreements and return of refugees), - institutional framework: a committee will oversee the smooth functioning of the agreement, assisted by a joint programming and monitoring committee (JPMC), - human rights clause: the agreements will include the standard clause on human rights and democratic principles as an essential element of the agreement, but will also include regular reports on compliance (in particular, the introduction of an institutionalized verification procedure). The Commission considers that at present it is difficult to say when negotiations could be opened (in any event not until peace has genuinely been consolidated in the region).

Former Yugoslavia: prospects for developping regional cooperation

1996/2076(COS) - 15/05/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Daniel COHN-BENDIT (V, D), the European Parliament voted in favour of a regional approach to relations between the European Union and the countries of south-eastern Europe. However, this approach needed to engulf the countries of the former Yugoslavia, Macedonia and all the bordering countries. The regional approach needed to be placed once again in a wider political context which took account of strategic interests and peace in the zone and called for the intervention of the CFSP. In particular, the European Parliament proposed: 1) a "Conference for peace, democracy, sustainable development and stability in south-eastern Europe" which would be convened every two years under the aegis of the European Union and would contribute towards stability in the region. Certain conditions would need to be met in order to attend: - observance of borders; - maintenance of good neighbourly relations; - respect for the freedom to worship, human rights and minorities; - free movement of persons; - guaranteed freedom of expression and fundamental democratic rights; - clarification of cases of litigation concerning ownership; - the reduction in arms to the lowest possible level; - joint responsibility for economic and ecological equilibrium in the region. In return, the European Union would implement an ambitious, long-term programme of economic intervention to promote the restoration of peace. Convinced that a multilateral framework is essential to political dialogue, the European Parliament planned to implement a "regional stability pact for peace and development"; 2) the consolidation of Bosnia as a sovereign state: Parliament considered that any regional initiative for the benefit of south-eastern Europe depended upon the restoration of this country as an independent state. In particular it felt that regional cooperation between zones of Bosnia-Herzegovina and neighbouring states should be stopped in areas which came within the sole jurisdiction of the state of Bosnia (e.g. foreign and customs policy). It therefore called for reconstruction programmes which were designed to unify the disparate elements of the state: - construction of a single telephone and telecommunications network for the whole of Bosnia; - construction of a rail/road link from Sarajevo to Zagreb via Banja Luka and from Sarajevo to Dubrovnik via etc.; - transformation of Bosnia into a free trade area with no internal frontiers; - creation of a national airspace between the main towns of Bosnia. At the same time, it called for the creation of a "Foundation for democracy" to help implement social, democratic, cultural and civil structures in Bosnia, mainly in the form of support for the independent media, training for journalists, support from NGOs, cooperation between universities, support for the economy, management training for SMEs and the development of multi-ethnic European schools which provided objective history lessons and separate religious instruction; 3) the definition of political conditions: reiterating its opinion that closer contractual relations between the European Union and Serbia-Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia depended on compliance with the terms of the Dayton agreement, it objected to any foreign policy (be it international or European) which would cause ethnic tension to erupt into open conflict, which was why the regional approach recommended by the Commission in its document appeared to be in keeping with its wish to see peace restored. Supporting the Commission's proposal not to conclude any agreement with these countries which did not contain clauses on democracy and respect for human rights, it called for: - Serbia to resolve its problem with Kosovo; - Croatia to develop its internal democracy; - Bosnia to operate its institutions on a non-ethnic basis which guaranteed pluralism; - these states to hand wanted persons over to the international court in the Hague; - Macedonia to undertake to continue to respect the rights of minorities in the country, in particular by allowing the Albanian minority to teach and learn its language and preserve its culture. The main aim was to combat secessionist trends and to convince former warring factions to cooperate, the role of the European Union being to encourage them to do so, which is why the European Parliament reiterated its proposal to institute the delegations of the ECMM (European Community Monitoring Mission) in order to encourage reconciliation. This instrument could become an embryonic "European military and civilian peace corps" by enlarging it with qualified civilian staff; 4) a symbolic gesture towards the young people of Bosnia, by organizing a pop music festival during the summer of 1998. This concert would be funded by the European Union under the aegis of the Presidents of the Parliament, the Commission and the Council and would bring young people of all ethnic origins together. Along the same lines, it hoped that new cross-border cooperation would be organized in the fields of culture and education and called for support for partnerships between towns and universities modelled on the "Conference of mayors of south-eastern Europe".

Former Yugoslavia: prospects for developping regional cooperation

1996/2076(COS) - 14/02/1996 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: The report examines the prospects for the development of cooperation between the countries of the former Yugoslavia and what the Community and its Member States could do to foster such cooperation as part of the assistance it provides to the region. SUBSTANCE: In order to implement cooperation among the countries of the former Yugoslavia, which is the key to the long-term consolidation of the political situation in the region, the Commission has two main types of instrument available: . contractual relations between the Union and the countries concerned: conclusion of a first generation of agreements meeting the following four criteria: - fostering of regional cooperation, - improvement and enhancement of relations with the Union, - the Union's contribution to peace and stability in the region, - the Community contribution to reconstruction of the former Yugoslavia.

They will also include: - a political dialogue based on the stability pact model, - a conditional clause (concerning in particular respect for commitments given under the peace agreements and economic reforms), - provisions on free movement subject to a commitment to freedom of movement with the country's neigbours, - trade cooperation with preferential access to EU markets for industrial products from these countries, - regional accumulation of origin and creation of a regional free trade area (to be negotiated within the WTO) and concessions on agriculture, - a flexible most favoured nation clause enabling these countries to grant each other reciprocal preferences, - economic cooperation based essentially on regional cooperation. . application of the Union's financial instruments: - PHARE (ECU 62.5 m to date) and humanitarian aid (a precise definition of needs will be required, together with close coordination of aid between the Commission and the Member States). - use of instruments as incentives for cooperation: regional cooperation should be encouraged through the PHARE multi-country programme (PHARE funds for cross-border measures for regional networks, training, environment, anti-drug measures, etc.), improved liaison for regional networks and regional cooperation schemes focusing on industrial cooperation, education and research. In conclusion, the Commission calls for regional cooperation to be fully taken into account in the application of the EU's financial instruments and for it to be a central component of the agreements to be negotiated.