Basic information

1996/2264(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
The first action plan for innovation in Europe **Subject** 3.50.04 Innovation	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENER Research, Technological Development and Energy	ROVSING Christian (PPE)	26/02/1997

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy	WATSON Sir Graham (ELDR)	17/12/1996

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Industry	2001	1997-04-24
Research	1912	1996-03-25
Research	2005	1997-05-14
Research	1952	1996-10-07

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
25/03/1996	Debate in Council		
07/10/1996	Debate in Council		
20/11/1996	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0589	Summary
10/12/1996	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/04/1997	Debate in Council		
14/05/1997	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
04/09/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
04/09/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0269/1997	

16/09/1997	Debate in Parliament		
17/09/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
06/10/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1996/2264(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	ENER/4/08464

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0269/1997 OJ C 304 06.10.1997, p. 0007	04/09/1997	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0440/1997 OJ C 304 06.10.1997, p. 0075-0080	17/09/1997	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0589	20/11/1996	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
CofR	Committee of the Regions: opinion	CDR0068/1997 OJ C 244 11.08.1997, p. 0009	11/06/1997	

The first action plan for innovation in Europe

1996/2264(COS) - 20/11/1996 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: following on from the 1995 Green Paper on innovation the Commission communication seeks to establish an action plan in order to coordinate and strengthen the efforts of the Member States and the Union in favour of innovative companies. SUBSTANCE: the action plan proposed by the Commission has three areas for action: 1) to foster a genuine innovation culture in companies: the Commission advocates firstly action on education and training. It will set up a permanent training and innovation forum to stimulate the exchange of experience and best practice and will foster links between schools in the use of the new tools of the information society. The Commission also intends to facilitate mobility for researchers and engineers to firms and will ensure increased effort under the Fifth Framework Programme for Research to achieve secondments of young

researchers and engineers to businesses, in particular SMEs. It will also establish a European benchmarking system, starting with quality. Lastly, the Commission will stimulate innovation in the public sector and government. 2) to set up a legal, regulatory and financial framework conducive to innovation: the European Union and the Member States should first of all make efforts to improve the European patent system, making it more efficient, more accessible and less expensive. To this end the Commission will prepare in 1997 a Green Paper on the issue of the Community patent. A service to assist firms and researchers with regard to intellectual property and action against counterfeiting will be set up under the RTD framework programme. The Commission also recommends that Member States set quantitative objectives and a timetable for cutting the formalities, costs and delays involved in starting up businesses. Lastly, in the vital area of innovation financing the Commission will launch pilot projects and encourage the mobilization of structural funds and the European investment fund. This Commission action should be guided by three objectives: encouragement of investment in risk capital and equity; the creation of the conditions for the development of new European capital markets for innovative companies; strengthening of the interfaces between innovation and financial circles. An information and guidance service on sources of funding will be set up for those taking part in the RTD framework programme. 3) to gear research more closely to innovation: the Commission calls on Member States to strengthen research carried out in companies, to encourage the start-up of technology-based firms and to intensify the cooperation between public, university and industrial research. It recommends that Member States should set ambitious objectives aiming to increase the share of the GIP dedicated to research and development and innovation; it hopes that encouragement will be given to dissemination measures in undertakings at local, regional or national level and will support pilot projects in this field. At Union level the Commission will emphasize in the Fifth Framework Programme the specific SME dimension by introducing greater flexibility in research contracts and in setting the maximum deadline for decisions. The positive experiences of the Research-Industry Task Forces will be used to improve coordination of research activities in the priority areas. Lastly, the Commission will improve the interaction of the framework programme with the COST and EUREKA initiatives and will encourage the CEEC and the Mediterranean countries to be involved in EU research projects by using the resources of the TACIS, PHARE and MEDA programmes.

The first action plan for innovation in Europe

1996/2264(COS) - 17/09/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Christian ROVSING (PPE, DK), Parliament welcomed the First Action Plan for Innovation in Europe as an initial basis for the discussion launched in the Green Paper on Innovation. It believed that innovation should be understood in the widest sense of the term and recalled that education and the enhancement of skills through vocational training and retraining were essential prerequisites for all investment in innovation. It emphasized that there was no standard model for innovation and recommended that measures be taken to ensure that new organizations or individuals involved in innovation were given maximum assistance, perhaps through tax incentives. It underlined the importance of proper financing after the initial creation process in new businesses and recognized the important role played by both the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund in creating employment. Parliament called on the Commission to: - give its action an order of priority; - make specific proposals on the financing of innovation, taking account of the non-homogeneous nature of SMUs, which required a flexible approach; - lay down rules on standards, trade marks and patents so that European products and services were compatible and interoperable; - define how the Community instruments (Framework Programme for Research and Development, regional and structural funds) could be used to improve the innovation capacity of the EU; - encourage research to be more innovative; - encourage pilot projects aimed at the internationalization of SMUs. It called on the Member States to: - continue reviewing courses and teaching methods; - improve links between the world of research and industry; - enhance the mobility of people between university and industry; - consider the use of tax incentives for innovative projects; - provide direct support for SMUs by strengthening their infrastructure for such businesses and to recognize that SMUs were essential in controlling the development of technology.