Basic information

1997/2016(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Human rights and democratic principles, implementation of measures. 1995 report **Subject** 6.10.08 Fundamental freedoms, human rights, democracy in general	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	IMBENI Renzo (PSE)	20/03/1997

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	VIRRANKOSKI Kyösti (ELDR)	20/03/1997
DEVE Development and Cooperation	CUNNINGHAM Tony A. (PSE)	23/07/1997
LIBE Civil Liberties and Internal Affairs	GOERENS Charles (ELDR)	22/04/1997

Council of the European Union

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/01/1997	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1996)0672	Summary
10/03/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/11/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
27/11/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0381/1997	
18/12/1997	Debate in Parliament		
19/12/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
19/01/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1997/2016(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/4/08574

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0381/1997 OJ C 014 19.01.1998, p. 0004	27/11/1997	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1996)0672	17/01/1997	Summary

Human rights and democratic principles, implementation of measures. 1995 report

1997/2016(COS) - 17/01/1997 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: This report sets out the main lines of action pursued in using the resources available in the 1995 financial year under the "European initiative for democracy and the protection of human rights" and puts forward a set of initiatives to build on the existing support. SUBSTANCE: It reviews all the measures taken by the Community under Chapter B7-52 which, at Parliament's instigation, groups together all the budget lines allocated to the promotion of human rights and democratic principles, and underlines the extent to which the increase in funding has made it possible to broaden the scope of intervention. Whether viewed from a thematic point of view (eg. promoting the rule of law, supporting the democratic transition process, promoting pluralist civil society) or a geographical point of view (eg. supporting democratisation in Turkey, Latin America etc.), the efforts have been considerable not only in terms of procedure but also in terms of the impact of the measures: - strengthening cooperation with regional and international organizations active in this field (UN, OSCE, Council of Europe) thereby avoiding duplication; - providing incentives such as those included in the revised Lomé IV Convention for making available resources for institutional and administrative reforms; - making instruments more complementary and ensuring continuity (notably "technical assistance" or "development cooperation" headings). However, the Commission concludes that these efforts have not yet produced notable results owing to the absence of an overall strategy for the use of financial resources. It therefore proposes the following guidelines to ensure effectiveness and visibility: - taking greater account of the "human rights" variable at the level of recipients (above all the fact that their work is non-profit making) and at the level of the actions themselves, by distinguishing between short-term actions and medium or long-term actions requiring greater continuity; - dovetailing the use of different types of instrument in order to avoid overlaps and provide the necessary continuity: projects should be assessed in terms of the likelihood of attracting other funding; - developing incentives to enhance the impact of initiatives by extending the Lomé idea of incentive amounts to other countries; - improving the linkage between the thematic and geographical approaches in order to improve intervention capacity in emergencies; - increasing "human rights" expertise with greater knowledge of the requirements of the countries or areas in question; - ensuring that information is accessible and that institutional guidelines are taken into account in establishing operational priorities (in particular by promoting a constructive dialogue with Parliament); - enhancing the continuity between action at Member State and Community levels by promoting the regular exchange of information with the Member States; - increasing synergies with international and regional organizations with medium-and long-term programming of the activities to be implemented jointly and by developing the capacity to handle one-off operations.

Human rights and democratic principles, implementation of measures. 1995 report

1997/2016(COS) - 19/12/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Renzo IMBENI (PSE, I) on the Commission report for 1995 on human rights, Parliament welcomed the Commission's efforts to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of EU activities in favour or human rights and democratization. It acknowledged the work by the Inter-Service Group in coordinating human rights activities by different Commission DGs and called for further improvement of the existing coordination in this field. It also called for an increase in staff where this was necessary. Parliament called on the Commission to publish annually a communication on compliance by third countries, with which the Community had concluded agreements, with the human rights and democracy clause contained therein. It should also indicate any blocking by non-member countries of human rights or democratization projects. With regard to budgetary matters, Parliament called for a strengthening of the funds to support electoral observation activities in third countries. It called on the Commission to draw up a communication evaluating EU participation in monitoring missions in third countries and the creation of a specific budget line distinct from the existing human rights lines. With regard to future reports on human rights expenditure, Parliament called for an assessment of the effectiveness of funded projects, the actions undertaken by NGOs, the breakdown of funding between official or government activities and those of organizations funded by the Community, comparable figures on expenditure by the United States or other international organizations and Europe in this field, etc. Parliament called on the Commission to draw up and publish its criteria for assessing the success or failure of funded projects. With regard to procedures it called on the Commission to reduce as far as possible the delays in the disbursement of grants and proposed greater transparency concerning access to funding. When the Union decided to place its diplomatic relations with third countries on ice due to serious shortcomings in the area of human rights, Parliament recommended that direct support for forces in civil society working towards the country's democratization should be continued, while bearing in mind special solutions appropriate to the specific problems involved. It reiterated that the inclusion of the democracy clause in cooperation agreements was an essential element in promoting human rights and democratic principles. Lastly, it proposed that a major evaluation conference could be held annually on the democratisation programmes throughout the world, along the lines of the October 1997 conference on the Phare and Tacis democracy programmes. It expressed its support for higher levels of expenditure to be made available for the promotion of human rights throughout the world.