Basic information

1998/2029(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
European Observatory for SMEs. 5th annual report 1997 **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		
Council of the European Union			

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
23/01/1998	Non-legislative basic document published	N4-0115/1998	Summary
20/02/1998	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
25/06/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
25/06/1998	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0255/1998	
16/09/1998	Debate in Parliament		
17/09/1998	End of procedure in Parliament		
12/10/1998	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1998/2029(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	ECON/4/09712

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0255/1998 OJ C 313 12.10.1998, p. 0006	25/06/1998	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0525/1998 OJ C 313 12.10.1998, p. 0134-0198	17/09/1998	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	N4-0115/1998	23/01/1998	Summary

European Observatory for SMEs. 5th annual report 1997

1998/2029(COS) - 17/09/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Michel SCARBONCHI (ARE, F) on the European Observatory for SMEs, the European Parliament welcomed the inclusion in the Observatory?s 1997 report of thematic studies on ?SMEs in Tourism? and ?SMEs and the Environment?, and on general trends in the situation of SMEs in the EFTA countries and the inclusion of a chapter entitled ?The European SME scoreboard? which provides useful background data on the structure and development of SMEs. It called on the Commission to submit, from next year, an annual ?State of small business" report which would go beyond the annual report of the European Observatory for SMEs by providing an annual assessment of Community policies and initiatives directed towards SMEs and proposing new policy routes. It called once again for the simplification and improvement of the legal framework for SMEs and for speedier implementation of SME aid programmes and payment arrangements. It fully supported the introduction of ?one-stop shops? which coordinate the services for SMEs, thus simplifying the subsidies application procedure. It called for improved targeting in the future of SMEs in rural areas in Community programmes, aid for developed but declining tourist areas, aid programmes for the training and adaptation of human resources and measures to publicise the euro through tourism. It calls for the next report: - to determine the extent to which SMEs, especially micro-enterprises, will be affected by changes to the social security systems; - to study the extent to which the concept of benchmarking is applied by SMEs; - to carry out a comparative survey on SMEs? access to capital through banks, stock exchanges, participating enterprises and other sources of finance; - to examine the problem of coordination between the various European programmes which target SMEs. The European Parliament also called for more attention to be given by SMEs to environmental issues. It also called on the Commission to take action to step up funding for the EXPROM programme, to promote SMEs at international trade fairs and to support the principle of reciprocity in the opening up of third countries? markets.

European Observatory for SMEs. 5th annual report 1997

1998/2029(COS) - 23/01/1998 - Non-legislative basic document

OBJECTIVE: presentation of the fifth annual report of the European Observatory for SMEs. SUBSTANCE: the report provides a structured overview of SMEs and the craft trades in Europe, in both quantitative and qualitative terms. It was drawn up independently by the European Network for SME Research, and concerns SMEs in the 15 Member States and the countries of the European Economic Area, i.e. 19 countries altogether. It deals with numerous subjects falling under the general heading of 'European integration' of SMEs: the economic performance of SMEs and craft trade businesses, the economic environment and the behaviour of SMEs, enterprise policies at European and national level and monitoring of the internal market in this context. It also incorporates two in-depth studies specifically devoted to tourism and the environment. As regards European policy on SMEs, the report states that its general objective is to create a propitious environment for the development of SMEs throughout the Union, to improve their competitiveness and to support the process of Europeanisation and internationalisation of enterprises. The report places the Commission's activities with regard to SMEs in the context of combating unemployment and stresses the important contribution of SMEs to growth, competitiveness and employment. It also stresses the effects of Community action to promote a new enterprise culture (particularly in connection with the guidelines for employment). The report sheds light on the strictly economic performance of European SMEs. In particular, it considers competitiveness in the European context (the Europe of the 15) and in the wider context of the EEA. It considers the specific context of SMEs in rural areas and provides indications about failures and bankruptcies in this sector, illustrating their general state of health. The report sheds light on recent developments with regard to policy on SMEs. Policies are still very influenced by the high unemployment rates and the need to achieve sustainable economic growth. According to the report, a series of measures are needed to promote the European SME sector more fully, particularly: -less administrative constraints, -a better fiscal environment for SMEs, -employment issues (especially employers' qualifications), -internationalisation, -development of R&D, -innovation.