Basic information

1999/2099(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Action to combat racism, xenophobia, antisemitism in the countries applicant for membership **Subject** 7.30.08 Action to combat racism and xenophobia 8.20.32 Justice JHA and enlargement	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	BELDER Bas (EDD)	23/09/1999

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs	LUDFORD Baroness Sarah (ELDR)	29/07/1999
JURI Legal Affairs and Internal Market	MORAES Claude (PSE)	23/09/1999
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	BRIE André (GUE/NGL)	14/10/1999

Council of the European Union

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
26/05/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0256	Summary
13/09/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
24/02/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
24/02/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0055/2000	
15/03/2000	Debate in Parliament		
16/03/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0121/2000	Summary
16/03/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
29/12/2000	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1999/2099(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148 Rules of Procedure EP 050
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/4/11028

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0055/2000 OJ C 377 29.12.2000, p. 0005	24/02/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0121/2000 OJ C 377 29.12.2000, p. 0184-0376	16/03/2000	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0256	26/05/1999	Summary

Action to combat racism, xenophobia, antisemitism in the countries applicant for membership

1999/2099(COS) - 26/05/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to give an overview of measures which can contribute to countering racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in the candidate countries. CONTENT : The scale of the minorities problem was illustrated in Agenda 2000 and continues to be a recurring problem in the following terms: minorities account for 44% of the population in Latvia (where 34% are Russian), 38% in Estonia (30% Russian), 20% in Lithuania (9% Russian, 7% Polish), 18% in Slovakia (11% Hungarian, 5% Roma), 14% in Bulgaria (9% Turks, 5% Roma) and 13% in Romania (8% Hungarian, 4% Roma). The presence of these minorities is the cause of racist and xenophobic sentiments against which so many of the candidate countries, like the Community, intend to mobilise themselves. In addition, it is an opportunity to remember that human rights and fundamental freedoms constitute a general principle of Community law and one of the principle motors of accession. In order to help the candidate countries adopt the necessary measures in terms of the fight against racism, the Union has at its disposal a battery of actions or programmes applicable to candidate countries. This support is channelled mainly through the Phare programme (and more specifically "Phare Democracy" which has now been integrated in the 'European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights') and the Meda programme for Turkey. In the same way, the candidate countries have adopted government plans or programmes to protect and promote minorities and tackle racism. However, there is a lack of resources which are needed in order to deepen the envisaged actions; this is why the Union intends to put in place other possibilities for actions by basing itself on the experience that it has acquired in this area. Also, consistent with the strategies to prepare the candidates for EU membership, efforts should focus on, wherever possible, opening Community programmes, agencies and activities to the participation of the candidate countries, in particular : 1) the Action Plan against Racism (see procedure COS/2068/1999) which prepares the ground for more ambitious action at European level under the new provisions of the Treaty on non-discrimination, in order to integrate the fight against racism in Community policies (a report is awaited from the Commission on the subject and a part of it will deal with actions undertaken in the candidate countries); 2) the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (see procedure CNS /0268/1996) set up in Vienna following Council Regulation EC/1035/1999 has as its principal objective the study of the extent and the development of

manifestations of xenophobia and of anti-Semitism within the Union. Since 1999, (see proecedure CNS/0143/1998) the European Monitoring Centre has signed an agreement with the Council of Europe in order to extend its field of action. This collaboration will enable common activities to be carried out within the EU and in the remaining 25 countries of the Council of Europe, including all the candidate countries. As a first practical measure to implement the agreement with the Council of Europe, the Monitoring Centre has proposed a joint project on the situation of the Roma people. The centre will also work inclose cooperation with organisations in the Member States and also international organisations. In the meantime, the possibilities for establishing informal cooperation between the Monitoring Centre and the candidate countries could be explored; 3) the implementation of the non-discrimination provisions of the Amsterdam treaty (Article 13): in addition to the implementation of legislative measures aiming to prohibit discrimination on grounds of racial and ethnic origin in a range of social and economic fields, legislation that will be applicable to the candidate countries, the Commission is exploring the possibility of proposing incentive measures to combat social exclusion under Article 137 of the EC Treaty. Such measures could also be applicable to participation by candidate countries; 4) the use of programmes concerning Education, Vocational training and Youth programmes as instruments in the fight against racism and xenophobia in candidate countries: programmes such as, Leonardo, Youth and Socrates are already open to candidate countries and may provide support to a wide range of initiatives tackling racism and xenophobia; 5) actions with Social partners and Civil Society: NGOs are principal actors for change in society and the European Commission will continue to support the development of civil society in candidate countries. However, governments should also be encouraged to involve NGOs in all aspects of their work to combat racism. Finally, the Commission will continue to strengthen its cooperation with other international organisations, and more particularly the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the OSCE. In addition, the preparations for the World Conference on Racism which will be held in 2001, will provide a good opportunity for the EU to work closely with the candidate countries.

Action to combat racism, xenophobia, antisemitism in the countries applicant for membership

1999/2099(COS) - 16/03/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted its resolution on countering racism in the candidate countries drafted by M. Bastiaan BELDER (EDD, NL). The Parliament calls on the Commission and the Member States to take action and provide adequate financial measures aimed at helping the candidate countries in regard to human rights and the protection of minority rights. Member States and the candidate countries are also urged to ensure that their policies towards asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants are free of xenophobia and racism and provide a proper statutory framework of rights with full respect for the Geneva Convention on Refugees. The Parliament calls on the candidate countries to implement legislation similar to expected EU laws and with effective enforcement bodies : to counter institutional racism ; to protect minorities ; to safeguard minority languages ; to eliminate racism in public life, housing and employment ; and to develop their educational programmes to broaden awareness of the dangers of racism and xenophobia. It also wants full attention to be paid to countering racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in the educational and training programmes for police officers, officials of judicial authorities and other public sector officials, and, in particular, those who are in direct contact with the general public. According to the EP, the Commission should ensure that the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia makes an appropriate contribution to extending the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism to the candidate countries and that it will cooperate as closely as possible with the Council of Europe's ECRI. It asks the European Monitoring Centre to prepare short reports on each candidate country indicating the minimum practical steps necessary to reach EU standards in respect of the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism. The European Parliament also stresses the importance of involving NGOs, grass roots organisations, trades unions, women's and youth organisations and ethnic group organisations in activities to counter racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism. The Parliament regrets the rise of organised racism in a number of the candidate countries and calls for the coordination of legislation against racial discrimination and urges the EU and candidate countries to cooperate closely to combat extremist and criminal racist organisations and organised crime including trafficking in migrants, and for both to pursue vigorously the prosecution of vilent racist offences. It considers that effective action will not only involve appropriate constitutional arrangements and the separation of powers but also the proper functioning of local courts and the local civil service, and calls on the Commission to monitor these aspects.