Basic information

2000/2053(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky **Subject** 3.20.01 Air transport and air freight	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism	ATKINS Sir Robert (PPE-DE)	26/01/2000

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	ZIMERAY François (PSE)	24/02/2000
ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2324	2000-12-20
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2292	2000-10-02
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2364	2001-06-27
Transport, Telecommunications and Energy	2279	2000-06-26

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Energy and Transport	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
01/12/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0614	Summary
18/02/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/05/2000	Vote in committee		Summary

23/05/2000	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0141/2000	
26/06/2000	Debate in Council		Summary
06/07/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0345/2000	Summary
06/07/2000	Debate in Parliament		
06/07/2000	End of procedure in Parliament		
02/10/2000	Debate in Council		
20/12/2000	Debate in Council		
24/04/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2053(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	RETT/5/12307

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0141/2000 OJ C 067 01.03.2001, p. 0009	23/05/2000	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0345/2000 OJ C 121 24.04.2001, p. 0181-0470	06/07/2000	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0614	01/12/1999	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2000)1018	07/06/2000	Summary

Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky

2000/2053(COS) - 01/12/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : the communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the creation of a single European sky.
CONTENT : this communication outlines the main objectives of a single European sky which include airport delays, air traffic congestion, air traffic management and the impact of air traffic on the environment. The creation of a single sky requires quite specific measures, as reflected in many other

areas of Community activity where measures are taken to ensure that all players operate in a common framework, where compatiblity between different systems is provided by common rules or where financial solidarity is organised to guarantee simultaneous implementation of common objectives. The functioning of the internal market - especially the common air transport policy, as defined in Article 71 of the Treaty and put into effect in particular by the opening up of national markets - justifies similar measures in the area of air traffic. The Commission's responsibility cannot be restricted to developing research projects to improve air traffic management which are then applied in fragmented airspace. In addition, the Commission takes the view that the creation of a single European sky cannot just be through common technical and operational solutions; collective management of airspace is needed in the interests of all its users, which must make for substantial reorganisation of its structures and use. This reorganisation must be along the following lines: - sectors must be subdivided and routes established regardless of frontier. This will enable the use of airspace to be organised along the lines of efficiency; - the division of airspace between the civil and military uses must take account of the new geopolitical realities and form part of a consistent and efficient framework. The way cooperation between the military and the civil sectors is currently organised does not tie in with the smooth running of airspace. Nor does the subdivision of zones reserved for military use take account of the collective interest of the COmmunity. The European Union has already shown that it can manage the relation between civil and military use of technology and this experience may be of use in this new context. With regard to delays, the average delay is 20 minutes and this can stretch up to several hours at peak periods. This situation angers passengers and frustrates the airlines. It also creates costs to the economy, for example, given that the total economic cost of delays linked to the congestion of airspace is of the order of EUR 5 billion and that these delays amount to about half of all delays, the damage could be put at EUR 10 billion a year. Responsibility for these delays is, of course, shared, and although operators and airports both account for a quarter of delays half of them are due to the saturation of airspace : - delays caused by operators are essentially operational and logistic, but these delays can be compounded by the commercial strategy of airlines which tend to concentrate certain flights at certain airports and at certain times of the day in order to facilitate connections; - in airports, apart from the rare operating incidents the principal cause of delays is the saturation of infrastructure, expansion of which often clashes with environmental constraints; - saturation of airspace is due to the need to ensure flight safety. Furthermore, the reform of air traffic control is a priority. The Community must assume its responsibilities by bringing its management of the airways in line with its economic and political integration. Europe cannot keep the frontiers in the sky that it has managed to eliminate on the ground; it must allow the freedom of movement of persons, goods, services beyond such frontiers. This would not be interpreted as undermining EUROCONTROL, but rather as the will of the Commission to highlight the complementarity of the Community's political goals and the specific responsibilities of EUROCONTROL to help meet the objectives of the Community while recognising the rights of the countries which are not members of the European Community. In addition, the issue of congestion of airspace calls for measures other than technical ones in the short term in order to prevent any further crises. In conclusion, the Commission will report within 6 months on the progress of implementation of the measures proposed in this communication.

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2000/2053(COS) - 26/06/2000

Commissioner de Palacio informed the Council of the work done to date by the High-Level Group she chaired. The Council took note of delegations' contributions and stressed that the Group's activities would have to continue later and - as had been agreed at the European Council in Santa Maria de Feira - the Commission was requested to submit a final report during the first half of 2001, with a view to making suitable proposals.

Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky

2000/2053(COS) - 27/06/2001

Vice-President Palacio gave the Council information on this issue. The Council recalled that the June 1999 Transport Council adopted a Resolution inviting the Commission to submit to the Council a Communication on measures aimed at solving the problem of ever-growing air traffic delays. In December 1999, the Commission presented a Communication aimed at setting up a Single European Sky. At Gothenburg, the European Council recalled the importance of the Single Sky initiative and noted that contacts were underway between the relevant Member States on the question of its territorial application. It is hoped that these contacts would produce early agreement. The Commission indicated its intention to bring forward detailed proposals with a view to achieving a Single Sky by 2004.

Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky

2000/2053(COS) - 06/07/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report drafted by Sir Robert ATKINS (EPP/ED, Uk) concerning the European Parliament's resolution on the Commission communication to the Council and the European Parliament on the creation of a Single European Sky. The European Parliament is of the opinion that the single European sky (airspace) must be created quickly. However, it believes that its creation on the basis of appropriate common rules and a separation of functions should not stand in the way of the public service duties of air traffic control and should leave Member States the choice of status for the operators providing it. The Council is also urged to take the political decision that the Commission should develop a single sky over a single market to provide the optimum use of European airspace, whilst maintaining the principle of subsidiarity, as well as equal access to the airspace for all users. With regard to Eurocontrol, the Parliament believes that it should therefore be divested of its obligation to service provisions and that immediate steps be taken to liberalise the provision of air traffic services by inviting the aviation industry to participate in and tender for such provisions and calls therefore on the Member States to: - pool regulative competences for air traffic control within the framework of this reformed Eurocontrol; - develop progressively a liberalised and fully operational internal market in the provision of air traffic services throughout the European Union's airspace and that of neighbouring European States. In terms of new technology, urgent consideration must be given to renewing and renovating the technical infrastructure to support the necessary improvements in ATM methodology and high priority must be given to the interoperability of new technology, and to the launching of European-scale research and technological development initiatives with the support of the Commission and the European industry to develop smart air transport systems relating to flow, information and communications management, such as

Galileo. As regards the use of military airspace, the European Parliament urges the Council to commit itself to an urgent review of the delineation, protection and use of military airspace, with a view to achieving smooth cooperation of civil and military air traffic services.

Air transport: creation of the Single European Sky

2000/2053(COS) - 07/06/2000 - Document attached to the procedure

In an information memo, the Commission presented an intermediate report on the work carried out by the High Level Group chaired by Ms Loyola de Palacio, Commissioner in charge of Transport. The discussions held until now in the Working group "Industrial and Social Questions" showed a growing consensus relating to the main issues which follow: - in order to promote security, improve efficiency and guarantee the continuation of these aviation transport activites, it is necessary to reform air traffic management in Europe and create both a strong regulator and regulation/legislation which is consistent across Europe and which establishes specific rules concerning security, economic conditions of service providers and the definition of the usage of air space; - the regulation must be coherent throughout Europe. Firstly, this implies defining high level rules in a unifrom manner for all the Member States. It is also necessary to provide a mechanism which would guarantee an effective application in Europe, not only by the Member States but also by the service providers and the users; - air space must be treated as a common resource, without internal frontiers. Below this pan-European air space there shall be a national structure responding to local needs (local constraints, access to airports, military demands) but at the same time compatible with the pan-European concept and plan; - the opening-up of a single European sky could be organised in stages, which would allow the implementation of a more integrated management system, starting with superior air space (above a certain altitude) and progressing by stages in order to reach the set objective; - for all users - commercial aviation, general aviation and the armed forces - they must have access to superior air space. Furthermore, no zone shall be permanently reserved for a category of users whoever they may be. Rules should be taken into account of the features of the use of military air space. The civil and military users are willing to improve the agreements relating to the co-ordination of air space usage and establishing arbitration procedures; - the commitment and the active involvement of air traffic controllers is the key to the success of the reform. The regulatory authorities and the Member States should improve the recrutement efforts and invest more in the quality of staff by providing training in order to make the profession more attractive; - it is necessary to encourage and if necessary, oblige the service providers, the airports and the users of air space to use equipment of which interoperability is guaranteed, to use new technologies and develop co-operation in such a way as to optimise the performances of the system. The High level Group report shall supply specifications on these orientations and shall formulate recommendations to organise a new framework. The Community framework could supply efficient instruments to regulate this sector. The Commission will continue to work with the Member Staterepresentatives and also with the social and industrial partners in order to finalise the report before October 2000 and thereafter present proposals as quickly as possible.