Basic information

2000/2137(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Democracy and human rights: EU election assistance and observation **Subject** 6.10.08 Fundamental freedoms, human rights, democracy in general	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	FAVA Claudio (PSE)	24/05/2000

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	HAUG Jutta (PSE)	06/06/2000
DEVE Development and Cooperation	KINNOCK Glenys (PSE)	20/06/2000

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Development	2352	2001-05-31

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
11/04/2000	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2000)0191	Summary
13/06/2000	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
06/02/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
06/02/2001	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0060/2001	
14/03/2001	Debate in Parliament		
15/03/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0149/2001	Summary
15/03/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
31/05/2001	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		Summary
05/12/2001	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2000/2137(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 050 Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/12704

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0060/2001	06/02/2001	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0149/2001 OJ C 343 05.12.2001, p. 0204-0270	15/03/2001	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2000)0191	11/04/2000	Summary

Democracy and human rights: EU election assistance and observation

2000/2137(COS) - 11/04/2000 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to present a communication from the Commission on EU election assistance and observation. CONTENT : in recent years, European union electoral missions have grown in frequency whether under the auspices of the Common Foreign and Security Policy or within the Community context, and in particular its developemnt cooperation, but up to now the experiences gained have not been compiled systematically. An ad hoc approach no longer seems appropriate not the best use of resources. The aim of this Communication is to contribute to the definition of a coherent European policy line through a proper approach involving a strategy and methodology, taking into account lessons learned from previous experiences. It responds to a specific request by the European Parliament to the Commission to assess EU participation in election observation missions in recent years. Election assistance may be defined as the technical or material support given to the electoral process. It may imply professional help to establish a legal framework for the elections. Moreover, election observation is the political complement to election assistance. It is defined as the "purposeful gathering of information regarding an electoral process, and the making of informed judgements on the conduct of such a process on the basis of the information collected, by persons who are inherently authorised to intervene in the process". Although the EU has gained significant experience in election observation and assistance in the last decade, approaches ahve been diverse and the wheel has sometimes been reinvented. Some progress has been made on criteria to decide on a EU electoral observation mission and a code of conduct for observers and criteria for recruiting them. But there is still a need for a coherent strategy for handling election observation and assistance. With regard to the legal framework, future EU election assistance and observation to be undertaken exclusively under the first pillar, mainly under regulations governing relations with third countries but also using new human rights regulations. In relation to the institutions, the Commission will study the opportunity of establishing an Elections Desk with horizontal co-ordination and planning tasks, including ex-ante evaluation, to assist geographical desks and delegations and liaise with EU institutions and other bodies. In addition, appropriate arrangements on electoral observation missions should be agreed upon among by the Council, the Parliament and the Commission. In conclusion, building on previous experience and existing work, the EU should adopt a strategy which: - allows for case-by-case decisions to support and observe elections; - promotes national capacity and sustainability; - promotes pluralism and support

local NGOs and local observers. The recommendations contained in this communication aim to improve the quality and effectiveness of the European Union's involvement in promoting free and fair elections and a transition to sustainable democracy bybuilding on the varied experience if EU involvement so far, and the expertise of others.

Democracy and human rights: EU election assistance and observation

2000/2137(COS) - 15/03/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament endorsed the report by Mr Giovanni Claudio FAVA (PES, I) by 419 to 8 with 16 abstentions. (Please refer to the previous document).

Democracy and human rights: EU election assistance and observation

2000/2137(COS) - 31/05/2001

The Council recalled its objectives in the matter of election support and observations and outlined some general principles on election support. In particular, it underlined the importance of an early dialogue with the national authorities, and the fact that consistency must be measured between election support, the Country Strategy for each partner country, and the objectives of the CFSP. Election support may contribute to increasing the confidence of the electorate in the election process, reduce the possibility of fraud, and present the opportunity to make recommendations for improving election systems in a spirit of partnership. Support may also contribute to conflict prevention. Effective EU support requires a coherent approach through mutually reinforcing use of both EC and CFSP instruments. The effectiveness of electoral assistance programmes and observation missions will be considerably increased if they are backed up by clear messages expressed through the EU's political dialogue with the government. The Council finds it constructive to differentiate between electoral assistance and election observation. The need for co-ordination and time limits vary considerably. The EU needs to develop different but complementary approaches. Close coordination between the Commission, the Council, the European Parliament and Member States in the pre-election assessment and analysis of political context is important. The Council will seek to establish jointly with the Commission a list of elections in which EU intervention is considered a priority. The list will be discussed with the European Parliament. These priorities should be kept under regular review throughout the year to ensure that political developments are taken into account. On election assistance, specific actions should include institutional capacity-building with regard to organising future elections including assistance in support of regulatory framework agreements for political parties and election finance; training and education of local staff; awareness campaigns for the rights of individuals to vote; setting up of election sites; support to domestic civil society organisations active in the election field and support for the media. On election observation, the Council encourages the Commission to provide training for observers and follow-up on creating adequate instruments in order to allow a timely response to provide accelerated decision-making and recruitment in urgent situations. The practice of appointing an experienced member of the European Parliament as the Chief Observer of an EU election mission should be encouraged. On assessment by missions, an independent assessment should be delivered to Council, Commission and Parliament. Under no circumstances may preliminary results be delivered beforehand. The Commission should further develop policy in this area, and particularly, impact indicators. The Commission will undertake an overall evaluation of EU election support within three years.