Basic information

2002/2069(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic) Undertakings: corporate social responsibility, integration of social and environment. Green Paper **Subject** 3.45 Enterprise policy, inter-company cooperation 3.70 Environmental policy 4 Economic, social and territorial cohesion 5.05 Economic growth	Procedure completed

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	HOWITT Richard (PSE)	12/09/2001

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	WESTENDORP Y CABEZA Carlos (PSE)	26/03/2002
ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
DEVE Development and Cooperation	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities	KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU Rodi (PPE-DE)	22/01/2002

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs	2392	2001-12-03
Energy	2394	2001-12-04

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	

Key events			
Date	**Event**	**Reference**	**Summary**
18/07/2001	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2001)0366	Summary
03/12/2001	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
04/12/2001	Debate in Council		
11/04/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
23/04/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
23/04/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0159/2002	
30/05/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0278/2002	Summary
30/05/2002	Debate in Parliament		
30/05/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
07/08/2003	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2002/2069(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	EMPL/5/16114

Undertakings: corporate social responsibility, integration of social and environment. Green Paper

2002/2069(COS) - 18/07/2001 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: To launch a debate on the promotion of corporate social responsibility within the EU. CONTENT: Regulations relating to social protection and health and safety at work are well established within EU legislation. This Green Paper, however, seeks to examine how the promotion of corporate social responsibility can be encouraged at a voluntary level without resorting to further regulations. It examines this not only at a European level but also at an international level. Further, it seeks to make the most of existing practices, to encourage the development of innovative practices, to introduce greater transparency and to offer greater credibility to evaluation and validation. Corporate social responsibility can be defined as a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and cleaner environment. Initiatives in this area include, for example, improved recruiting policies (non-discrimination), better opportunities for racial minorities, greater involvement with local communities and offering supprt on changes at work. Other activities include a greater awareness of human rights and working condition abroad. Factors driving the move towards corporate social responsibility include: - new concerns and expectations from citizens, consumers, public authorities and investors in the context of globalisation and large scale industrial change; - social criteria influencing the investment decisions of individuals and institutions both as consumers and as investors; - increased concern about the damage caused by economic activity to the environment; - transparency of business activities brought about by the media. Bearing this in mind, the Green Paper suggests that the EU approach should be to provide an overall European framework to corporate social responsibility through the adoption of broad principles and promoting best practice. In addition, the EU could support best practice approaches to cost-effective evaluation and independent verification of corporate social responsibility practices. Such a departure could improve not

only the effectiveness but also the credibility of voluntary activities relating to corporate social responsibility. Ultimately the Commission is hoping this initiative will offer a new European framework for the promotion of corporate social responsibility. The Green Paper is being given a wide circulation and it is hoped that it will be discussed at local, national and European level.

Undertakings: corporate social responsibility, integration of social and environment. Green Paper

2002/2069(COS) - 30/05/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Richard HOWITT (PES, UK) on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and called for social and environmental reporting to be included alongside financial reporting requirements. (Please refer to the document dated 24/04/02.) Annual social and environmental impact assessment reports should be independently verified and include all levels of the company, and its supply chain and business partners, where appropriate. The Commission should put forward a proposal on social labelling, which should be based on criteria such as compliance with human and trade union rights, the work environment, training and development of employees, equal treatment, social and ethical consideration for employees and citizens in the surrounding community. The Commission should also consider whether it is appropriate to introduce common social and environmental labelling. On stakeholding, the EU CSR Forum is called upon to devise guidelines for wider stakeholder dialogue, drawing from the experience of companies, NGOs, trade unions, academics and governmental authorities. The resolution calls for the mainstreaming of CSR in all areas of EU competence, in particular regional and social funding where companies could play a stronger role in supporting training for socially responsible restructuring. Finally, the Commission is called upon to investigate the possibility of creating a European Ombudsman for European enterprises operating in developing countries with respect to CSR.

Undertakings: corporate social responsibility, integration of social and environment. Green Paper

2002/2069(COS) - 02/07/2002

A new strategy on Corporate Social Responsibility ('CSR'), which aims to take forward the contribution of business to sustainable development, was adopted by the European Commission. This document calls for a new social and environmental role for business in a global economy and sets up a 'European Multi-Stakeholder Forum' for all players social partners, business networks, civil society, consumers and investors to exchange best practice, to establish principles for codes of conduct and to seek consensus on objective evaluation methods and validation tools such as 'social labels'. The strategy seeks to complement existing initiatives by companies themselves and by public organisations such as the OECD and the UN. CSR is defined as voluntary social and environmental practices of business, linked to their core activities, which go beyond companies' existing legal obligations. The strategy will also support CSR in small and medium-size undertakings ('SMEs'), in particular by identifying the business case for CSR and by awareness raising of SMEs. The Commission has an important role to play in CSR, bringing together businesses across Europe to share best practice and to establish common principles for evaluation. Finally, the Commission will work towards building CSR principles into all other EU policies, for example by promoting better understanding of CSR in developing countries. The Commission will publish a report on the work of the European Multistakeholder Forum in 2004. The new Commission strategy for CSR is designed to : - promote the business case for CSR in order to make it attractive to more and more companies, in particular SMEs; - promote external evaluation and benchmarking of companies' social and environmental performance in order to make CSR credible; - manage a European Multi-Stakeholder Forum in order to focus discussion on CSR; - ensure that EU policies are CSR-friendly. The Commission proposes to build its strategy to promote CSR on a number of principles. These are as follows: - recognition of voluntary nature of CSR; - need for credibility and transparency of CSR practices; - focus on activities where Community involvement adds value; - balanced and all-encompassing approach to CSR, including economic, social and environmental issues as well as consumer interests; - attention to the needs and characteristics of SMEs; - support and compatibility with existing international agreements and instruments (ILO core labour standards, OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises).