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Presentation of the Commission work programme for 2011

European Parliament resolution of 15 December 2010 on the Communication from the Commission on the Commission Work Programme 2011

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Communication on the Commission Work Programme for 2011 (COM(2010)623),
 - having regard to the last Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the European Commission, in particular Annex 4 thereof,
 - having regard to Rule 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas it is crucial that the Dialogue between the European Parliament and the Commission should be carried out in good time so that efforts can focus on defining the EU's key strategic objectives for the next year and the coming years,
- B. whereas political priorities should be matched with the available financial resources,
- C. whereas European policy and action, hand in hand with that of Member States, in accordance with the subsidiarity principle, can and must have a real influence in helping citizens anticipate and react to a rapidly changing society,
- D. whereas 2011 will be of crucial importance to the future success of the Union and a significant challenge for the European Commission and the Union as a whole,
- E. whereas the financial crisis is still having significant effects on the economies of the Member States and major adjustments must be made at both national and EU level; whereas a full recovery requires a common European strategy for sustainable growth and employment creation, backed by the necessary powers and resources,
1. Notes that this work programme is the first to be adopted under the new programming cycle, and underlines that the dialogue established with the Commission needs to be deepened in order to improve the obvious link between the political priorities and the budget to finance them at EU level;
 2. Urges the Commission to commit itself to performing a realistic and operational programming exercise which must be effective and be translated into reality and better implemented than in the past; asks for a clearer timetable relating to major proposals to be put forward;
 3. Urges the Commission to adapt the *acquis* to the provisions of Articles 290 and 291 TFEU as soon as possible, according to a clear timetable;

Introduction

4. Calls on the Commission to act to the fullest extent of its legal powers and political authority; notes that the European Union cannot function effectively unless the Commission identifies,

articulates and promotes the general interest of the Union and citizens, and efficiently performs its duty to oversee the application of the Treaties and EU law;

5. Notes that the efforts made so far to solve the financial crisis and to sustain Europe's economic recovery have fallen way below what is necessary; and deplores that the work programme does not include additional measures to create more jobs; calls on the Commission, therefore, to spell out its detailed response to how its initiatives and proposals will meet the challenge;
6. Believes that the EU must address structural reform without delay in order to improve its competitiveness and re-launch growth; believes also that the modernisation of infrastructure (including broadband), increased effort regarding research, development and innovation, a policy ensuring sufficient, economical and clean energy, innovation and the development of new technologies and the quality of education and training are central planks of the strategy;
7. Welcomes the priority given to the reform of European economic governance; warns that, unless the EU can develop credible economic governance, particularly in the eurozone, capable of ensuring sound fiscal policy and restoring growth, the future of the euro will be in jeopardy; insists that such reform must take full account of Parliament's position, as set out in its resolution of 20 October 2010, and must have as its purpose the furtherance of the Union's economic and social objectives, as set out in Article 3 of the Lisbon Treaty;
8. Recalls that Parliament and the Council, as the two arms of the budgetary authority, should be equally involved in any mobilisation of the European Financial Stability Mechanism; asks that proposals be presented rapidly to make the crisis resolution mechanism permanent (e.g. European Monetary Fund), to fully integrate the EU 2020 strategy into the long-term macroeconomic framework, to take initial steps towards the mutual issuance of a part of sovereign debt and the introduction of bonds to that effect, as described in Parliament's previous reports, and to ensure a single external representation of the Eurozone; favours a light Treaty change that provides a legal basis to such a mechanism rather than resorting to a profound amendment of the Treaty;
9. Insists that the Commission must rapidly bring forward proposals to revise the current financial framework; states that the MFF for the period after 2013 must also reflect the increased scope of those responsibilities; calls on the Commission to present an ambitious investment proposal in order to meet the targets of the EU 2020 strategy, and to create jobs, boost growth and guarantee the security of European citizens; considers that flexibility within this framework will be essential and that the EU budget should allow for the mobilising of alternative sources of financing (earmarking, project bonds, etc.);
10. Recalls that the adoption of the MFF Regulation requires the consent of Parliament; calls on the Commission to facilitate the rapid adoption of an inter-institutional agreement on the role of Parliament in the preparation and negotiation of the next MFF;
11. Strongly urges the Commission to come forward in June 2011, following the adoption of Parliament's position on the new MFF, with bold and innovative proposals for a substantive revision of the own-resources system, to create a system which is fair, clear, transparent and neutral concerning the tax burden for EU citizens; strongly believes that the MFF and the issue of own resources are interlinked, should be decided at the same time on the basis of an open inter-institutional debate, with strong involvement of national parliaments, and cannot be further postponed;

- 12 Stresses that cohesion policy represents one of the most important EU instruments responding to the economic crisis, by promoting investment in the real economy; welcomes, in this context, the Commission's first assessment of the implementation of cohesion policy-related measures within the European Economic Recovery Plan, which underlines the key role played by this policy in the process of countering the effects of the crisis; underlines the unquestionable linkage of cohesion policy with all three major priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy, by facilitating the delivery of higher smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, while promoting harmonious development across the Union's 271 regions;

Restoring growth for jobs: accelerating towards 2020

13. Notes the introduction of a 'European Semester'; believes that Parliament's committees must have a more important role in order to demonstrate their expertise by producing 'end-of-year reports' on progress in achieving important objectives, followed by political group (joint) resolutions;
14. Regrets that the proposals for the European Semester and the governance package provide little opportunity for European democratic scrutiny, and insists on strong parliamentary involvement in both;

Financial regulation: completing the reform

15. Calls on the Commission to come forward with proposals on the recast of the Market Abuse Directive and Market in Financial Instruments Directive as soon as possible; notes that the Commission must bear in mind the possible cumulative impact of the proposals that it is introducing to ensure that they enhance the stability, transparency and accountability of the financial sector and its capacity to serve the real economy in terms of growth and jobs;
16. Asks for the legislative initiative on crisis resolution in the banking sector to be coordinated with competition policy rules to create a comprehensive framework for crisis management, covering private and public actors and protecting the taxpayer; believes that the revision of the Regulation on Credit Rating Agencies should address the lack of competition in the sector and asks the Commission to act on Parliament's recent request to examine options for an independent European credit rating agency and stronger involvement of independent public entities in the issuing of ratings;

Smart growth

17. Calls for the Commission to present a comprehensive action plan, with a timetable and targets, to deliver a single market for online content and services, in the interests of an open and prosperous digital society, and to overcome the digital divide;
18. Stresses that the digital agenda and investment in ICTs is crucial to Europe's long-term competitiveness, and urges Member States and the Commission to continue market roll-out of next generation networks and access to them through continued liberalisation of the internal market for communications in order to boost innovation in the EU;
19. Strongly encourages the Commission to foster knowledge and innovation in the FP8 further to the midterm review, and recalls the importance of Parliament having the opportunity to express its own priorities prior to the adoption of the FP8 in 2012;

20. Welcomes the Commission's ambition with regard to the Innovation Union which will involve reviewing state aid for R&D and innovation frameworks, enhancing the role of the EIB and venture capital; also acknowledges the role public procurement can play in stimulating innovation;
21. Urges the Commission to reduce red tape in its R&D programmes and increase the participation of innovative firms in the projects; considers that the Commission should further promote public private partnerships to foster European research, development and innovation;
22. Stresses the importance to be given to the new multiannual programmes after 2013 in the field of education, culture, audiovisual, youth and citizenship, expected to be presented in 2011; considers that actions and measures taken in these programmes should respond to the needs of the European citizens and be based on an adequate and efficient budgetary framework; considers that the initiative 'Youth on the Move' underlines the importance of those programmes;

Sustainable growth

23. Underlines the strategic importance of the flagship initiative on resource efficiency, and urges the Commission to work swiftly on an ambitious proposal aimed at achieving binding targets and concrete benchmarks within the framework of the EU 2020 European Semester of policy coordination; and calls on the Commission to come forward with legislation to further reduce EU emissions;
24. Considers that priority should be given to the proper and functional implementation of existing legislative instruments such as the Third Energy Package, and fully supports the 2050 strategy, smart grids and security of supply initiatives;
25. Emphasises that, for economic growth to be sustainable, energy security is vitally important to ensure uninterrupted supply, respect for contractual arrangements, a fair market price, and the avoidance of dependence on too small a number of producers;
26. Believes that the Communication on the new Industrial Policy for Europe should be followed by effective measures, in particular to achieve the desired shift towards a low-carbon and sustainable economy and to ensure that the 20% EU energy efficiency target will be met;
27. Underlines that climate change mitigation and adaptation is a high priority which will also benefit the competitiveness of the European industry and SMEs;
28. Welcomes the key priorities as regards the publication of the White Paper and urges the Commission to speed up the preparation of the revision of the TEN-T guidelines and its modernised financing mechanisms, in line with the Europe 2020 strategy and the review of the EU budget;
29. Insists from the outset that the CAP reform process must result in a strong, fair, genuinely common and multifunctional policy that meets the expectations of consumers and producers and effectively delivers 'public goods', especially food security, and guarantees the EU's food self-sufficiency;
30. Recalls that, in its resolution of 8 July 2010 on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013, it insisted that the amounts allocated to the CAP in the budget year 2013 should be at least maintained during the next financial programming period;

31. Demands that agricultural imports from third countries should only be allowed into the EU if they have been produced in a manner consistent with European consumer protection, animal welfare and environmental protection standards and minimum social standards; insists that the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral trade agreements should not be to the detriment of EU agricultural producers;
32. Urges the Commission, in the light of the findings of the Court of Auditors' report on the reform of the sugar market, to review its impact assessment procedures in order to ensure that the best and most timely information is used when preparing all assessments, which will be critical when assessing the impact of future bilateral trade agreements for key sectors of the EU economy;
33. Welcomes the forthcoming Commission proposals to implement the Integrated Maritime Policy, such as the proposal on the framework for Marine Spatial Planning and the Communication for sustainable growth in coastal regions and maritime sectors, as well as the communication on the integration of maritime surveillance; stresses, however, that funding to implement the IMP must be guaranteed in the Community budget by means of a proportional contribution from all the sectors affected by this policy;

Inclusive growth

34. Believes that inclusive growth can only be built on a foundation of equal treatment for all workers within the workplace and a level playing field for all businesses; believes the Commission Work Programme should include proposals to guarantee these principles, and insists that the legislative proposal on implementation of the Posting of Workers, as foreseen in the Communication on the Single Market Act, must clarify the exercise of fundamental social rights;
35. Calls for the presentation of a Commission proposal on the financial participation of employees in company earnings;
36. Calls on the Commission, in its reports on 'New Skills and Jobs' and 'a Platform against Poverty', to take into consideration specific difficulties that women face, specifically to promote equality in the workplace as a means of tackling poverty, and to encourage women to become entrepreneurs, by pursuing measures which share best practice;
37. Strongly believes that closing the gender pay gap remains a real challenge that needs to be overcome, and reiterates the requests made to the Commission in Parliament's 2008 resolution to submit to Parliament a legislative proposal on the revision of the existing legislation relating to the application of the principle of equal pay for men and women, taking into consideration the recommendations annexed to its 2008 resolution;
38. Calls on the Commission to heed the views of the social partners in the area of pensions and ensure that the White Paper reflects the expectations of both sides of industry, including the strengthening of the first pillar;
39. Welcomes the reform of the EURES job portal, making information and job advice to young workers more accessible, but regrets that this proposal has been postponed until 2012, while young people need it today;

40. Calls for more effectiveness and delivery concerning two major EU training agencies – Cedefop, the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, and ETF, the European Training Foundation;

Tapping the potential of the Single Market for growth

41. Strongly supports greater market integration, targeting the significant persistent gaps, as identified by Professor Monti, and enhancing the trust of Europe's citizens, workers, small businesses and consumers; believes, whilst welcoming the publication of the Single Market Act, that the proposals should be more ambitious and concrete; calls on the Commission to put forward, as soon as possible, clear priorities and legislative proposals;
42. Asks for modernisation of the EU public procurement legislative framework, through harmonisation of the directives and the Government Procurement Agreement, and calls for a clearer timetable for next year;
43. Calls on the Commission to ensure a consistent approach between the legal instrument on European contract law and the Consumer Rights Directive; considers it essential for a clear Commission Policy Strategy for Consumers to be tackled in an integrated manner as a matter of urgency in 2011, and not in 2014 as currently proposed;
44. Supports the revision of the Package Travel Directive and the review of the General Product Safety Directive focusing on market surveillance;
45. Underlines the need for an efficient legal framework for product safety in the EU; supports the review of the General Product Safety Directive, which requires a clearer calendar to be established, in line with the review of the NLF; calls on the Commission to review the CE marking system to ensure that CE marking can be considered as a safety mark by consumers;
46. Underlines that civil law initiatives are crucial for revitalisation of the Single Market; supports the Commission's actions as far as civil justice is concerned, calling for civil law instruments to be made more e-justice friendly;
47. Calls on a final resolution of the problems surrounding the establishment of a European patent and calls on the Commission, if necessary, to come forward with a proposal for enhanced cooperation;
48. Strongly regrets the lack of legislative initiative on cabotage and the delaying until 2012 of rail market access, including the opening of the market to domestic passengers; reiterates Parliament's firm conviction that a comprehensive passenger rights policy in Europe must be preserved and developed;

Pursuing the citizens' agenda: freedom, security and justice

49. Is deeply concerned that there are no concrete proposals on fundamental rights or the horizontal Non-Discrimination Directive, and that the issue of non-discrimination is not even mentioned; calls on the Commission to act swiftly to unblock the Non-Discrimination Directive;
50. Calls for a proposal for a Communication on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum, but regrets the absence of legislative proposals on asylum, bearing in mind that the Union should have a common asylum policy in place by 2012;

51. Calls for proposals on migration; recalls that the correct functioning of the proposed Entry/Exit System will depend on the success of VIS and SIS II, although SIS II is not yet fully operational;
52. Underlines the need for an ambitious fundamental rights policy, following the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, and the need to make the fundamental rights provided for in the Charter as effective as possible; asks the Commission to ensure the compatibility of each legal initiative with fundamental rights as well as guarantee that Member States respect the Charter when implementing EU law; calls for the strengthening of capabilities for monitoring, and applying the treaty mechanisms against, violations of the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
53. Emphasises that, in the fight against terrorism and organised crime, the rights and freedoms of EU citizens should be fully respected and that data protection and the right to legal redress are essential in creating a credible and effective security policy; considers that the increasing number of crimes requires more Community plans on organised crime and cyber-security;
54. Welcomes the proposal on the rights of victims of crime and, above all, on the right to legal assistance and legal aid, but regrets that this is the only measure foreseen; calls for a clear timetable for the remaining measures of the procedural rights roadmap;
55. Welcomes the launch in 2011 of a new comprehensive legal framework for the protection of personal data in the EU: underlines that it will carefully scrutinise all proposals, including EU-PNR and EU-TFTP, to ensure their compliance with fundamental rights;
56. Welcomes the proposals on civil law, but asks the Commission, in order to achieve common standards for EU citizens across Member States, to consider speeding up the revision of the *acquis* in the field of civil and criminal law and report to Parliament;
57. Supports initiatives aimed at reconciling work and family life *inter alia* through measures on minimum parental leave and the promotion of flexible working arrangements for women and men, as well as help for carers to combine employment with caring responsibilities;
58. Regrets the delay in the Commission's putting forward legislative proposals in the area of the 'Lisbonisation' of the current *acquis* in police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, which is a Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs priority;
59. Considers that, following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the revision of the legal framework is essential, and regrets that this revision is only proposed for 2012 – 2013; insists that all JHA agencies must be efficient and - most importantly - accountable;

Europe in the World: Pulling our weight on the global stage

60. Emphasises that the promotion of human rights across the world is a key objective of the European Union on the global stage and that improved trade relations and reinforced development assistance can help encourage progress in this field;
61. Calls on the Commission to keep up the momentum for the enlargement process;
62. Stresses that, regarding the following topics, new initiatives would be welcomed:
 - the EU's role in counter-terrorism, in order to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

- the development of the European defence industry and European defence policy ambitions in a long-term (2020) perspective,
 - disarmament and global governance,
 - the strategy vis-à-vis the BRIC countries,
 - the Mediterranean Union review, in the view of the current stalemate.
 - a revitalisation of the Transatlantic Economic Council and also, possibly a joint strategic security review, following the new NATO strategic review;
63. Believes that, in order for it to effectively project its values and principles and to contribute to political stability and economic development in its neighbourhood, the EU must support young democracies across Europe and strengthen relations with its partners; calls on the Commission to finalise the review of the ENP with the aim of ensuring better coherence between policy objectives and financial instruments; considers that human rights and democracy conditionality should be strengthened in its relations with neighbours;
64. Calls on the Commission to afford greater priority to food security throughout Africa; underlines the need to reinforce the agricultural sector in Africa, in a sustainable manner; in this context, urges the Commission to ensure greater access for the poor to credit and financial services in Africa; urges the Commission to promote measures to boost intra-continental African trade, including upgraded support packages for the regional economic communities and for improving infrastructures across the African continent;
65. Calls on the Commission to provide a yearly report on EU progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015 and to introduce measures to ensure Member States fulfil their commitments to 0.7% GNI to ODA, and to monitor such undertakings;
66. Stresses that, in the context of the ongoing negotiations on EPAs, there should be renewed focus on the development dimension;
67. Calls on the Commission to actively promote tangible progress in the ongoing WTO negotiations in order to conclude the Doha Round as soon as possible; insists that the strengthening of existing bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements and the conclusion of new ones is of importance, but should be considered as a complementary strategy and not as an alternative to the multilateral framework;
68. Recalls that multilateralism must remain the EU's first priority, and demands that ongoing and new trade negotiations should respect the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries; firmly believes that an effective and reformed multilateral trade framework is needed to build a more balanced and fair economic system as part of a new global governance at the service of development and of the eradication of poverty;
69. Underlines that imports from third countries should be put on the EU market only if they comply with European consumer protection; considers that, in international negotiations, the Commission should insist that our trading partners comply with European environmental, social and labour standards;
70. Calls for a CSR clause to be included in international trade agreements signed by the EU; considers that this must include reporting and transparency for corporations and due diligence for undertakings and groups of undertakings, investigations in case of proven breaches of CSR commitments and better access to the courts for victims of the actions of corporations;

71. Asks the Commission to bring forward a legislative initiative along the lines of the new US 'Conflict Minerals' Law in order to reinforce transparency and good governance in the extractive industry sector in developing countries; calls on the Commission to step up the fight against corruption in such countries, which undermines human rights and good governance;

From input to impact: making the most of EU policies

72. Calls on the Commission to rapidly present proposals amending the OLAF Regulations;

73. Stresses that the Commission should contribute more openly to a positive attitude towards National Management Declarations (NMD) signed by finance ministers; emphasises that the Commission should urge Member States to issue NMDs; calls for the introduction of comprehensive user-friendly online databases;

74. Calls, therefore, for systematic, regular and independent evaluations of EU programmes - both internal policies and development assistance - in order to ensure that they are achieving the desired outcomes and are doing so in a cost-effective way, in order to:

- take account of comments made by the Parliament in its discharge resolutions;
- allow a more strategic horizontal look across the findings of the various evaluations carried out, and at the Commission's performance;

75. Strongly believes that a correct and timely transposition and implementation of European directives is particularly important to eliminate citizens' mistrust of EU actions; considers that this requires effective cooperation between the Commission and Member States;

76. Urges that EU legislation be simplified and underlines that impact assessments, prior to legislation, must be used impartially and efficiently, taking implementation into account; strongly supports the Commission's ongoing efforts on the Smart Regulation project;

77. Welcomes the fact that the Commission will pay more attention to competitiveness aspects in the impact assessments and underlines the importance of evaluating the cumulative effects on competitiveness of combined pieces of legislation ('fitness checks');

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78. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.