

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA
JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Ref. 1105736
Brussels
12 January 2011

35TH MEETING OF THE EEA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

European Parliament, Strasbourg, Room S7- SDM Building

Wednesday, 24 November 2010, 15.00 - 18.30

and

Thursday, 25 November 2010, 09.00 - 12.00

Draft Minutes

Opening of the meeting

1. The President of the EEA JPC, Mr Pat the Cope GALLAGHER, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants to Strasbourg.

Adoption of the Draft Agenda (1102194)

2. The agenda was adopted in the form shown here.

Approval of the minutes of the 34th meeting of the EEA JPC (1102695)

3. The minutes from the previous meeting in Vaduz in March were adopted.

Development of the EEA Agreement and follow up to resolutions adopted at the 34th meeting of the EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee

4. In his contribution, Mr Nikulás HANNIGAN, representing the President-in-Office of the EEA Joint Committee and the President-in-Office of the EEA Council, outlined recent EU-level developments detrimental to the EEA Agreement. He indicated that the EEA/ EFTA states will closely monitor EU initiatives such as Europe 2020, the Single Market Act as well as the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and the further creation of the EEAS. Additionally, he stressed the importance of the participation of EFTA states in the sectoral supervisory authorities recently established by the EU and which aim to restore confidence on the financial markets. As such, he welcomed initiatives already undertaken by the EU to incorporate EFTA states in these bodies. Moreover, he recalled that the EEA and Norwegian financial mechanism for 2009- 2014 was formally signed in July 2010. By doing so, EEA states and Norway will designate €360 million to overcome social disparities across the EU. Mr HANNIGAN welcomed the activities by the EEA JPC and applauded its resolution on the Common Fisheries Policy. Additionally, he recalled that EFTA Ministers recently supported its calls to the Commission to send EEA relevant proposals to the parliaments of EU Member States and EEA/EFTA members simultaneously. Finally, and in line with the EEA JPC's Resolution on Regional Cooperation, he noted that a newly established Forum of Regional and Elected Representatives met for the time during the summer of 2010.

5. In his speech, Mr. Hubert ROISIN, Counsellor, Belgium, representing the EU President of the EEA Council, presented the recent activities of the EEA Council. He recalled that in its recent meeting, the EEA Council members were satisfied with the functioning of the EEA Agreement while discussing possible intensification of cooperation efforts between EU and EEA/ EFTA members. According to Mr. ROISIN, the EEA Council reflected upon the decision to establish an EU financial monitoring system and indicated that EFTA/ EEA members could possibly be party to these arrangements. Moreover, he recalled that the EEA Council discussed the efforts by the EU aiming at achieving political stability and growth. As such, Mr ROISIN recalled the particular interest by EEA/ EFTA Members in the EU's Europe 2020 initiative. Moreover, Mr. ROISIN recalled that the Council welcomed the opening of EU accession negotiations with Iceland as well as the agreement on the Additional Fisheries Protocol for Iceland and Norway regarding certain types of fish, but that signatories should complete the necessary procedures. Mr ROISIN indicated that the recent EEA Council meeting focused on energy policy. He noted that the EEA Council discussed the EU's recent and upcoming efforts with regard to preparing energy policy initiatives. According to Mr ROISIN, the EEA Council stressed that a more coordinated energy policy should be established which simultaneously envisions increasing interconnectivity as well as diversifying energy sources and suppliers. Finally, he noted that the EEA Council President invited EEA/ EFTA members to comment on EU energy policy initiatives, while best practices should be shared with regarding to safety rules for offshore oil and gas rigs.

6. Mr Gianluca GRIPPA, representing the EU President of the EEA Joint Committee, presented an assessment by the European Commission of the overall functioning of the EEA Agreement. He recalled that in 2010 the EEA Agreement continued to function well, and that more than 300 new acts were incorporated in the Agreement. Specifically, Mr GRIPPA noted the efficient cooperation with regard to the incorporation of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme therein. Moreover, Mr GRIPPA was confident that an agreement would be reached between the EU and EEA/ EFTA states with regard to the European Deposit Guarantee Scheme, while he called signatories to the new Additional Protocols on Trade in Fish and Fishery Products with Iceland and Norway to make the necessary adjustments. Moreover, he welcomed the agreement between the EU and Norway regarding the liberalisation of trade in agricultural products. He expressed hopes that the upcoming EEA revision will be speedy, while he called for rapid, constructive efforts on behalf of Norway with regard to the liberalisation of trade in processed agricultural products. Although no agreement has yet been reached on air safety and the incorporation of the Audiovisual Media Directive into the EEA Agreement, Mr GRIPPA expressed satisfaction with the overall functioning of the Agreement. Moreover, he expected that the Lisbon Treaty will have a manageable impact on the internal market-related provisions of the EEA Agreement, while he hoped that Iceland would join the EU in the foreseeable future. Additionally, he welcomed the decisions by Norway and Liechtenstein to establish EEA Review Committees, and stressed the need for looking into opportunities of streamlining EEA operations and using new technologies in order to lower costs. Finally, Mr GRIPPA indicated that, in accordance with the two pillar system of the EEA Agreement and its role outlined in the Lisbon Treaty, the European Commission will remain primarily responsible for informing the parliaments of EU Member States, while the EFTA Secretariat should fulfil the same function in relation to EFTA members' parliaments.

7. In his contribution, Mr Per SANDERUD, President of the EFTA Surveillance Authority, focused on state aid procedures. In light of the financial crisis, he recalled that regulations by ESA and the European Commission recently have been adapted to allow

for state aid in exceptional circumstances. He noted that these regulatory changes aim at maintaining financial stability as well as a level playing field, while encouraging lending by viable banks without state support. Moreover, Mr SANDERUD summed up numerous cases regarding state aid by the European Commission, Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland. As regards Iceland, he indicated that although various state aid cases remain (such as the alleged violation of the Deposit Guarantee Directive in the 'Ice Save case' and ESA's preliminary positive opinion regarding the ongoing procedure in which 48 banks questioned whether Iceland is allowed to rank deposit holders before other creditors), slow progress is made. Finally, Mr SANDERUD addressed the role of EU agencies, and he indicated that ESA is prepared to provide input in the discussion about incorporating these agencies within the legal EEA/ EFTA framework.

8. In the ensuing debate on the statements of the specially invited guests, the following Committee members took the floor: Mr Árni Thór SIGURDSSON regretted the European Commission's decision to send EEA/ EFTA relevant proposals only to the parliaments of EU member states and wondered about the visibility of the EU Presidency in the EEA JPC following the establishment of the EEAS; Mr Svein Roald HANSEN recalled the efforts by the Norwegian Parliament to increase cooperation with the European Parliament and welcomed the initiation of a formal discussion on streamlining the EEA Agreement; Ms Laila DÅVØY urged for understanding of Norway's reservations regarding EEA provisions relating to the advertising of alcohol; Ms Diana WALLIS invited Mr GRIPPA to share his views on the usage of new technologies within the framework of the EEA Agreement; Mr Søren Bo SØNDERGAARD asked about the issues that have existed with regard to the implementation of the Services Directive and Post Directive.

9. In the subsequent round of replies, Mr GRIPPA indicated that the European Commission *per se* is not against transmitting proposals to the Parliaments of EFTA members, but that it merely acts in line with the two pillar system under the EEA Agreement. Moreover, he indicated that according to EU's Audiovisual Directive, signatories cannot ban advertisements stemming from outside the county's premises. Finally, as regards the usage of technology with regard to the EEA Agreement's provisions, Mr GRIPPA called for more usage of electronic means as well as the digitalisation of information. Mr HANNIGAN expressed confidence that an agreement on air safety would be found soon, while he indicated that technological developments are welcome as long as they maintain the integrity of the EEA Agreement. Mr ROISIN indicated that it is not yet clear how the creation of the EEAS and the post of High Representative will impact the working provisions of the EEA Agreement. Regarding the implementation of the postal services and services directives in Norway, Mr SANDERUD reflected on the role of the ESA herein.

The Lisbon Treaty

Briefing by: Mr Indrek TARAND (Greens/ALE, Estonia)

A presentation by Mr Indrek TARAND focused on the Lisbon Treaty and its implications for European citizens, national parliaments and the European Parliament was followed by discussions among Members: Ms WALLIS supplemented the presentation by Mr TARAND; Mr Paul RÜBIG highlighted the importance of the Lisbon Treaty, the related Citizens Initiative and the changing role of the different European Institutions; Mr HANSEN wondered whether the Lisbon Treaty resulted in changes in the affiliation of MEPs; Mr Ignazio CASSIS emphasised the delicate nature of the debate on the role of parliaments while reflecting on the Swiss parliamentary situation and its tools of direct democracy; Ms Catherine STIHLER highlighted the importance of transparency in parliamentary procedures; Ms WALLIS emphasised that voting in the European

Parliament generally takes place along the lines of European political families. Moreover, she noted that with regard to direct democracy initiatives, the EU still finds itself in an early phase of development; Mr Eugen DAVID invited MEPs to comment on the status and eventual effects of the Resolution on Obstacles with regard to the full Implementation of the internal market in the EEA and Switzerland. Subsequently, Mr RÜBIG addressed the request by Mr DAVID.

Consideration of the draft report on "Europe 2020: Innovation and the EEA"
(1102699)

Co-rapporteurs: Ms Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDÓTTIR (Independence Party, Iceland)
Mr RÜBIG, (EPP, Austria)

10. Ms Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDÓTTIR introduced the draft report based on the EU's Europe 2020 strategy. While outlining the content of Europe 2020, she stressed that the Strategy should not serve as a means for protecting the EU's internal market. Because it explicitly includes the internal market and touches upon programmes and policies which are relevant and/ or financed by EEA/ EFTA states, Ms GUNNARSDÓTTIR noted that Europe 2020 is of relevance to the EEA/ EFTA states. On the other hand, she noted that Europe 2020 entails policies which clearly fall beyond the scope of the EEA Agreement, which could make the Strategy of less relevance to EEA/ EFTA members. As such, she argued that overall Europe 2020 might be more difficult to handle for EEA/ EFTA states than its predecessor, the Lisbon Strategy. Subsequently, Mr RÜBIG outlined the key challenges for the EU as well as Europe 2020 and its various flagship initiatives. Moreover, he welcomed the incorporation of EEA/ EFTA members into statistical benchmarks relevant to the objectives of Europe 2020. In response to the presentation, the following Members took the floor: Mr DAVID talked about the possibilities to reduce brain drain within the EU; Mr HANSEN recalled the difficulties the EU experienced with achieving the Lisbon Strategy and explained how Norway and Iceland are performing with regard to the Europe 2020's targets.

11. The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

Consideration of the draft report on "The European Year against Poverty and Social Discrimination" (1102698)

Co-rapporteurs: Mr HANSEN (Labour Party, Norway)
Mr GALLAGHER (ALDE, Ireland)

12. Mr GALLAGHER introduced the topic and gave short background of the European Year 2010. While recalling that social inclusion and poverty resolution are basic rights of EU citizens, he noted that in the European Year framework, the 27 member states of the EU, Iceland and Norway are participating alongside each other, thus highlighting the depth of EU- EEA/ EFTA cooperation. Subsequently, Mr HANSEN outlined the situation in the EU as regards poverty and economic growth and stated that the obligation of combating poverty has become more immanent as result of the financial crisis. Moreover, he sketched activities undertaken in Norway and Iceland in the framework of the European Year, while noting that member states are primarily responsible for combating poverty. Mr HANSEN stated that the draft report aims giving a voice to people who are living in poverty, while inspiring others to combat it. Finally, he stated that in the draft report ensuring employment is considered the foremost instrument to combat poverty. As such, he proposed to move point 13 of the draft resolution up to point 8. In the ensuing debate, the following Members took the floor; Mr SIGURDSSON described the situation in Iceland following the economic crisis, agreed with the proposal of Mr HANSEN and emphasised the need of follow-up activities; Ms

Brigitta GADIENT stressed that proper qualifications are needed in order to gain employment. As such, she suggested emphasising the importance of ensuring training opportunities in the report; Mr DAVID noted that social security systems should aim to gradually reintegrate beneficiaries in the labour market; Ms DÅVØY noted that unsuitability is a primary reason for unemployment.

13. The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

Consideration of a working paper on "Trade in Seal Products" (1102691)

Rapporteur: Mr Kåre SIMENSEN (Labour Party, Norway)

Briefing by: Ms Arlene McCARTHY (S&D, United Kingdom)

14. Mr Kåre SIMENSEN introduced the topic and recalled the previous activities in the European Parliament on this topic. He recalled the diverging views of the European Parliament and Norway regarding trade in seal products and seal hunting and expressed hopes of reconciliation and a facts-based debate. Ms McCARTHY outlined European level legislative activities regarding the prohibition of trade in seal products. Moreover, she gave insight in the decision by the EU to prohibit trade in all seal products and indicated that the EU is legally entitled to do so. In the ensuing debate, the following Members took the floor; Mr HANSEN agreed that public perception needs to be taken into account when establishing legislation. Moreover, he argued that products resulting from seal hunting for marine management purposes should be allowed to be marketed; Ms Marlies BÄNZIGER asked how Norway and the EU are able to oversee sustainable hunting of seals; Ms GUNNARSDÓTTIR recalled that every state has the right to manage its own natural resources; Mr Sigmundur D. GUNNLAUGSSON called upon the EU to adopt a logical approach towards the management of natural resources; Ms STIHLER agreed with the remarks of Ms McCARTHY.

The Consumer rights Directive

Briefing by: Andreas SCHWAB (EPP, MEP, Germany)

15. Mr Andreas SCHWAB briefed the EEA JPC members about the status of the Consumer rights Directive. According to Mr SCHWAB, persisting differences between EU member states regarding consumer rights are hindering the attainment of the Single Market. In this respect, he noted that with regard to consumer rights some harmonisation efforts will most probably be undertaken, although EU member states prefer retaining significant national competence in this area. In the subsequent discussion, the following Members took the floor: Ms STIHLER touched upon the differences between EU Member States with regard to consumer rights and the arising need for harmonisation; Mr DAVID asked whether withdrawal rights are also applicable to cross-border internet sales; Mr SIMENSEN recalled the strong consumer rights in Norway and the related reservations with regard to total harmonisation and subsequently asked about the status of the Consumer rights debate within the EU; Mr HANSEN recalled that during the preparation process of the Consumer rights Directive, the parliaments of EEA/ EFTA countries sought cooperation with the political groups of the European Parliament.

Future work of the EEA JPC

16. By a decision of the Bureau, Mr GALLAGHER indicated that the future work of the EEA JPC will focus on: the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty (by Norway); the High North (by Iceland), and; Annual Report.

Elections of the President and Vice-President of the EEA JPC for 2011

17. Mr GALLAGHER announced that pursuant a principle of rotating presidency of the JPC, Mr HANSEN (Norway) will take over the position of President and Mr GALLAGHER will become Vice-President in 2011.

Any other business

18. Mr GALLAGHER addressed a letter sent by the European Commission's Director-General of the External Relations regarding the simultaneous transmission of legislative proposals of relevance to the EEA Agreement to the parliaments of EU Member States and EEA/ EFTA members by the Commission. According to Mr GALLAGHER, the Director-General indicated that the transmission of documents should be under taken in accordance with the Lisbon Treaty and the two pillar system as agreed upon under the EEA Agreement: the European Commission is responsible for informing the EU Member States and European Parliament, while the EFTA Secretariat should provide the EEA/ EFTA member states with relevant documentation. In response, Mr HANSEN stated that he will further look into possibilities to improve the transmission of information to the EEA/ EFTA members.

19. Mr HANSEN informed the EEA JPC about the draft programme for the upcoming meeting in Oslo and Svalbard.

Date of next meeting

20. The President concluded the meeting and said that the next meeting would be in Oslo and Svalbard, Norway, in 11-15 April 2011.

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JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

Ref. 1102194
19 November
2010
Brussels

35TH MEETING OF THE EEA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

*European Parliament, Strasbourg
SDM Building, meeting room S7*

*Wednesday, 24 November 2010
15.00 – 18.30*

and

*Thursday, 25 November 2010
09.00 – 12.00*

AGENDA

- 1. Opening of the meeting**
- 2. Adoption of the Draft Agenda** (Ref. 1102194)
- 3. Approval of the minutes of the 34th meeting of the EEA JPC** (Ref. 1102695)
- 4. Development of the EEA Agreement and follow up to resolutions adopted at the 34th meeting of the EEA Joint Parliamentary Committee**

Statements by

- Mr Nikulás HANNIGAN, representing the President-in-Office of the EEA Joint Committee and the President-in-Office of the EEA Council
- Mr. Hubert ROISIN, Counsellor, Belgium, representing the EU President of the EEA Council
- Mr Gianluca GRIPPA, representing the EU President of the EEA Joint Committee
- Mr Per SANDERUD, President of the EFTA Surveillance Authority

Followed by an exchange of views

- 5. The Lisbon Treaty**
Briefing by Mr Indrek TARAND, (Greens/ALE, Estonia)
- 6. Consideration of the draft report on "Europe 2020: Innovation and the EEA"**
(Ref. 1102699)

Co-rapporteurs: Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDÓTTIR (Independence Party,
Iceland)
Mr Paul RÜBIG, (EPP, Austria)

Followed by an exchange of views

7. Consideration of the draft report on "*The European Year against Poverty and Social Discrimination*" (Ref.1102698)

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Svein Roald HANSEN (Labour Party, Norway)
Mr Pat the Cope GALLAGHER (ALDE, Ireland)

Followed by an exchange of views

8. Consideration of a working paper on "*Trade in Seal Products*" (Ref. 1102691)

Rapporteur: Mr Kåre SIMENSEN (Labour Party, Norway)
Briefing by Ms Arlene McCARTHY (S&D, United Kingdom)

Followed by an exchange of views

9. The Consumer rights directive

Briefing by Andreas SCHWAB (EPP, MEP, Germany)

Followed by an exchange of views

10. Vote on the draft resolutions

11. Future work of the EEA JPC

12. Elections of the President and Vice-President of the EEA JPC for 2011

13. Any other business

14. Date of next meeting

RESOLUTION

on Europe 2020: Innovation and the EEA

Co-rapporteurs: Ms Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDÓTTIR (Independence Party, Iceland)
Mr Paul RÜBIG (EPP, Austria)

Adopted on 24 November 2010 in Strasbourg.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. HAVING regard to the conclusions of the European Council of 17 June 2010 which finalised the European Union's new strategy for jobs and smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020 Strategy) and which agreed as one of the headline targets for the strategy improving the conditions for research and development, in particular with the aim of raising combined public and private investment levels in this sector to 3% of GDP,
- B. HAVING regard to Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the Innovation Union,
- C. HAVING regard to the initial Lisbon Strategy and its re-launch in 2005 as the Growth and Jobs Strategy,
- D. HAVING regard to EEA EFTA participation in the Lisbon Strategy, through the Internal Market and legislation under the Community programme/method, a wide range of EU programmes, several Open Method of Coordination processes, and inclusion in Eurostat,
 - 1. welcomes the more ambitious, comprehensive, and coherent nature of the new Europe 2020 strategy and urges all stakeholders, both governmental and non-governmental, to work much harder than in the previous ten years of the Lisbon strategy to reach the overall goal of smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth; and calls for strong synergies between the Innovation Union flagship and other relevant flagship initiatives, as well as with other EU policies such as the Single Market Act;
 - 2. stresses that in the decade passed since the Lisbon Strategy was adopted, Europe has been faced with a whole new set of challenges, characterised by intensified globalisation and increased competition from emerging markets, climate change, acute energy security issues, and negative demographic trends and thus; underlines the need for a more comprehensive, efficient and smarter growth strategy whereby Member States commit to and implement new, necessary and more ambitious reforms;
 - 3. underlines that although Europe has no shortage of potential, with world leading researchers, entrepreneurs and companies and unique strengths, it faces weaknesses when it comes to innovation which includes under-investment in the knowledge foundation, unsatisfactory framework conditions, ranging from

poor access to finance, high costs of IPR to slow standardisation and ineffective use of the potential of public procurement to support innovation, and too much fragmentation and costly duplication;

4. draws attention to that the EU is under-investing in its knowledge base, spending every year 0.8% of GDP less than the US and 1.5% less than Japan in R&D, with major gaps in business R&D and venture capital investments; and highlights the facts that private sector R&D is increasingly outsourced to emerging economies and thousands of the EU's best researchers and innovators have moved to countries where conditions are more favourable;
5. stresses that although the EU market is the largest in the world, it remains fragmented and insufficiently innovation friendly and in spite of the fact that the services sector accounts for 70% of the economy, knowledge intensive services are still under-developed, with countries like China and South Korea catching up fast and moving from being imitators to leaders in innovation;
6. recognizes the importance of Europe's competitiveness on a global scale as well as the importance of smart regulation ensuring an analysis of competitiveness on all levels of regulatory EU interventions, notes in this context that the competitiveness of energy-intensive industries is key to achieving the long term strategic goals of Europe 2020, as these industries provide an important part of the value chain of the manufacturing industry in Europe and have become one of the world leaders in energy efficiency; therefore highlights the importance of setting the framework conditions to ensure that those energy-intensive industries find conditions for competitive production in Europe in the future, inter alia by taking into account the risks of carbon leakage as well as possible indirect impacts of energy price increases caused by emission trading;
7. welcomes the main premises of Innovation Union which sets out a bold, integrated and strategic approach whereby innovation is the overarching policy objective; a medium- to longer-term perspective is taken; all policy instruments, measures and funding are designed to contribute to innovation; EU and national/regional policies are closely aligned and mutually reinforcing; and last but not least, the highest political level sets a strategic agenda, regularly monitors progress and tackles delays;
8. stresses that the success of the Innovation Union depends on a common planning, a common involvement and a responsible task-sharing between all relevant members of the European Commission implementing an efficient, well-coordinated and integrated innovation policy in Europe.
9. stresses that at times of significant austerity measures and budget constraints it is pertinent for Europe to safeguard its sources of future growth and jobs by prioritising investment in education, training, R&D&I and key technologies, including key enabling technologies, and by developing strong policies for human resources in science, technology and innovation;
10. underlines that the EEA EFTA States have been involved in the Lisbon Strategy through the Internal Market, selective OMC processes, and inclusion in Eurostat, and that it will be important to explore the EEA relevance of new Europe 2020 proposals, and therein ensure closer cooperation between the EEA

EFTA States and the EU in key policy areas as well as take into account each other's policies;

11. calls on the EEA EFTA States to increase their internal coordination and joint actions vis-à-vis the EU in order to more effectively influence EEA relevant processes, policies, and legislation under Europe 2020; underlines that this cooperation should go beyond the technical expert level and include coordination at the highest diplomatic and political level to discuss where closer EU-EFTA cooperation is needed to ensure smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth in the EEA;
12. draws attention to that Europe 2020 will arguably constitute future challenges for the EEA EFTA States due to the comprehensive nature of the strategy which makes it difficult to agree on common EEA EFTA positions as that would entail common positions in areas where the EEA EFTA States have so far not had common approaches and where this would be a significant departure from current positions in a number of areas;
13. urges the EEA EFTA States to increase their involvement in aspects of Europe 2020 that are EEA relevant such as the Single Market as key instrument in Europe 2020; underlines the importance of for the EEA EFTA States to effectively influence EEA relevant processes under the new strategy at both expert based and political level;
14. encourages the EEA Council to include Europe 2020 on the agendas of its upcoming meetings, to allow for timely discussions at the highest political level of the EEA structures, especially during the implementation of the strategy;
15. welcomes the EEA EFTA States' significant contributions through the EEA Grants and Norway Grants in the fields of climate change and energy security and with regards to Green Industry;
16. highlights that eco-innovation should be one of the main components of the overarching European innovation policy agenda, as it plays a key role in achieving objectives related to the environment and climate, energy, resource and material use and biodiversity;
17. highlights the importance of further improving the business environment especially for SMEs; takes note of the considerable progress already achieved under the Lisbon strategy and the small business act, however recommends further progress in application of "think small first" principle in support of eco-innovation, internationalisation and cooperation between enterprises; moreover notes that this can be achieved by recognising the importance of regional cluster initiatives that are connected EU wide, within the context of smart specialisation and achieving critical masses for R&D, innovation and funding;
18. welcomes that the Commission will design future EU research and innovation programmes to ensure simple access and stronger involvement of SMEs, in particular those with a high growth potential; and urges that the EU should put in place financial instruments to attract a major increase in private finance and close the market gaps in investing in research and innovation;

19. urges an improvement of access and participation of the business sector, particularly SMEs in the Framework Research Programme of the European Union as the goal of a 15 %-share of SMEs has not yet been reached; in addition, recommends a better integration of SMEs in the Joint Technology Initiatives (JTIs) as well as in the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs);
20. welcomes the launch of a pilot partnership on active and healthy ageing by the beginning of 2011 and the execution of a pilot project in order to determine the most suitable format for upcoming Partnerships;
21. urges the development of more effective education and training programmes for creative people and researchers whereby high level of mobility can be facilitated and links between universities, research organisations and industry, both publicly and privately funded, are strengthened;
22. stresses that the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men should be an integral part of the European innovation strategy, in order to foster the involvement and creativity of women in research, innovation and competitiveness;
23. underlines that coherence and coordination between different EU policies and between EU and national, regional and local policies and programmes must be enhanced in order to mobilise resources in an efficient way;
24. stresses that the European Union and its Member States should treat scientific cooperation with third countries as an issue of common concern and develop common approaches, wherever appropriate; and underlines the need for European Union Member States to put into place policies to ensure that leading academics, researchers and innovators reside and work in Europe and to attract a sufficient number of highly skilled third country nationals to stay in Europe; and highlights that the external dimension must be taken into account in EU research and innovation policies, with the aim of ensuring open and competitive markets, and attracting investments, researchers, and innovative talent;
25. recognises the importance of standardization in promoting innovation and R&D which is a key element of the internal market; and urges the European Commission to present an integrated, well-developed standardisation policy ensuring market-access by SMEs in particular; highlights the difficulties that persist in European research programmes, notably the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), such as limited coordination between national, regional and European research policies, excessive bureaucracy, low risk tolerance, poor efficiency and undue delays;
26. underlines that scientific excellence and basic and applied research, supported by world-class infrastructures, life-long learning, training and higher education, in particular in science and engineering are the preconditions for an efficient innovation system.

RESOLUTION
on the European Year 2010 for Combating

Poverty and Social Exclusion

Co-rapporteurs: Mr Pat the Cope GALLAGHER (ALDE, Ireland)
Mr Svein Roald HANSEN (Labour Party, Norway)

Adopted on 25 November 2010 in Strasbourg.

The Joint Parliamentary Committee of the European Economic Area:

- A. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 20 October 2010 on the role of minimum income in combating poverty and promoting an inclusive society in Europe;
- B. Having regard to the European Parliament legislative resolution of 17 June 2008 on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010),
- C. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2007 on social services of general interest in the European Union,
- D. Having regard to the European Parliament legislative resolution of 20 May 2008 on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States,
- E. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2010 on atypical contracts, secured professional paths, and new forms of social dialogue,
- F. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2007 on social reality stocktaking,
- G. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 9 October 2008 on promoting social inclusion and combating poverty, including child poverty, in the EU,
- H. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 6 May 2009 on the active inclusion of people excluded from the labour market,
- I. Having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 6 May 2009 on the Renewed social agenda,
 1. emphasises that the current financial, economic and social crisis has had a tremendous social impact, including the erosion of working conditions, increasing difficulties for people to access basic needs and services, increased homelessness, over indebtedness and financial exclusion, increasing social tensions;
 2. stresses that the world is currently facing a severe economic downturn and competition for jobs is fierce which brings the risk that those already excluded will face greater pressure and will be left further behind; and highlights that these negative consequences affect first the most vulnerable including young people, older people, children and women, as well as ethnic minorities and migrants;

3. welcomes the European Year 2010 for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (EY2010) as a means to emphasise these pertinent issues and; mindful of that it needs to be considered as the beginning of a process, and not as an end in itself;
4. welcomes the active participation of the EEA EFTA States in the European Year 2010 for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion which goes to show the deep involvement and cooperation between the EU and the EEA EFTA States on a wide array of policy issues;
5. stresses that in 2008, 17% of the population was assessed to be at-risk-of-poverty following the concept of relative poverty adopted in the European Union and that 20% of children were at-risk-of poverty in the EU; highlights that on average, social protection reduced poverty by 32% in the EU with large discrepancies between countries and that one European in ten lives in a household where nobody works;
6. emphasises that holding a job is not always sufficient to escape from poverty and 8% of the EU population were at-risk-of-poverty in 2008 despite having a job; and highlights that in 2008, approximately 85 million people in EU-27 (17%) lived below the poverty threshold, a situation likely to hamper their capacity to fully participate in society;
7. welcomes the renewed political commitment of the EU and its Member States to combat poverty and social exclusion constituted in the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion; and supports the key objectives of the EY2010;
8. underlines that employment must be viewed as one of the most effective safeguards against poverty and social exclusion, and; urges the Commission to reinforce and clarify the original Lisbon target of eradicating poverty by the adoption of a clear headline target for the EU to reduce the levels of poverty measured against GDP by 2010 and to develop a set of social inclusion standards against which to judge the results of the social inclusion strategy;
9. considers that minimum income schemes - consisting of financial support plus easier access to services for people on low incomes - are the most effective way to guarantee an adequate standard of living and foster social integration;
10. stresses that a living wage must always be above the poverty threshold and that workers who remain below that threshold should receive top-ups that are unconditional;
11. notes that Social Services of General Interest form one of the pillars of the European social model and play an essential part in securing civic peace and the European Union's economic, social and territorial cohesion, as they contribute to economic growth, prosperity, employment and social cohesion;
12. stresses that a right balance must be found between rules on competition, public aid and the market on the one hand, and concepts of public service, general interest and social cohesion on the other and; highlights that positive synergies between the economic and social aspects should be promoted and that rules on competition, public aid and the internal market must be compatible with public service requirements;

13. stresses that social inclusion and social protection are a basic value of the members of the EEA and a fundamental right for all individuals, regardless of ethnic origin, age, gender, disability, sexual preference and religion;
 14. emphasises that adequate minimum income schemes are a fundamental prerequisite for a European Economic Area based on social justice and equal opportunities for all, therefore it calls on all EEA States to ensure that an adequate minimum income is provided for periods out of work or in between jobs;
 15. calls on EU and EEA institutions, Member States and organised civil society associations to address poverty eradication by means of a holistic approach and urges Member States to reduce child poverty by 50% by 2012 and to allocate sufficient resources in order to achieve this goal;
 16. emphasises that inclusive labour markets are the goal and that discrimination has to be tackled as well as other social and physical barriers to accessing the labour market;
 17. cautions that some of the so-called incentive measures to encourage people into work, particularly loss of benefit, do nothing to address questions of poverty, which is especially problematic if that work may be short-term, casual or part-time;
 18. stresses that in the framework of the current economic crisis it is crucial that social policy goes hand in hand with economic policy aiming at a sustainable recovery of both the European people and the European economy, and; stresses that the renewed social agenda should focus on the policies that contribute to the above.
 19. reminds that for actions to be effective they should be built up on a democratic and a bottom-up participatory process carried out locally and close to the citizen.
 20. welcomes the continued commitment of the EEA EFTA States to contribute to reducing economic and social disparities in Europe.
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**ПРИСЪТБЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KΑΤΑΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRŠ/DALYVIŲ SĄRAŠAS/JELENLÉTI ÍV/
REGĪSTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŠCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LISTÁ DE
PREZENŢĂ/ PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Бюро/Mesa/Předsednictvo/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficiodipresidenza/Prezidijs/Biuras/Elnökség/ Prezydium/Birou/Predsednictvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)	
Mr Pat the Cope GALLAGHER (1.2) <i>Chairman</i>	
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselek/ Membri/Leden/Poslowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter	
Mr Petru Constantin LUHAN (1), Mr Paul RUBIG (1.2), Mrs, Zuzana BRZOBOHATA (1.2), Mrs Arlene MCCARTHY (2), Mrs Catherine STIHLER (1.2), Mrs Diana WALLIS (1), Mr Indrek TARAND (1.2)	
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Supplenti/ Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantysnariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membrossuplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/Namestniki/ Varajäsenet/Suppleanter	
Mr Andreas SCHWAB (2), Mrs Britta REIMERS (1), Mr Soren Bo SONDERGAARD (1)	
Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/ Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétariat des groupes politiques/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Frakciju sekretoriai/Képviselecsoportok titkársága/Sekretarjat gruppi politici/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupin/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeristö/Gruppernas sekretariat	
PPE S&D ALDE ECR Verts/ALE GUE/NGL EFD NI	Mr Per HEISTER Mr Thomas KRINGS
Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/ Directorate-General/Direction générale/Direzione generale/Generāldirektorāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/Direktorat Generali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/ Pääosasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG INTE DG FINS DG ITEC	## ## ## ## ## ## ## ## ## ##

Секретариат на комисията/Secretaría de la comisión/Sekretariát výboru/Udvalgssekretariatet/Ausschusssekretariat/Komisjoni sekretariaat/Γραμματεία επιτροπής/Committee secretariat/Secrétariat de la commission/Segreteria della commissione/Komitejas sekretariāts/Komiteto sekretoriatas/A bizottság titkársága/Segretarjat tal-kumitat/Commissiesecretariaat/Sekretariat komisji/Sekretariado da comissão/Sekretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottssekretariatet
Mr Michal MALOVEC
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Assizstēns/Asystent/Pomočnik/Avustaja/Assistenten
Ms Cesarina DALL'OZZO

- * (P) =
 Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Priekšsēdētājs/
 Pirmininkas/ Elnök/Chairman/Voorzitter/Przewodniczący/Preşedinte/Predseda/Predsednik/Puheenjohtaja/Ordförande
- (VP) = Заместник-председател/Vicepresidente/Místopředseda/Næstformand/Stellvertretender
 Vorsitzender/Aseesimees/Αντιπρόεδρος/ Vice-Chair(wo)man/Vice-Président/Priekšsēdētāja vietnieks/Pirmininko
 pavaduotojas/Alelnök/VicìChairman/Ondervoorzitter/Wiceprzewodniczący/Vice-
 Presidente/Vicepreşedinte/Podpredseda/Podpredsednik/Varapuheenjohtaja/Vice ordförande
- (M) = Член/Miembro/Člen/Medlem./Mitglied/Parlamendiliige/Μέλος/Member/Membre/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képvisező/
 Membro/Lid/Członek/Membro/Membro/Člen/Poslanec/Jäsen/Ledamot
- (F) = Длъжностно
 лице/Funcionario/Úředník/Tjenestemand/Beamter/Ametnik/Υπάλληλος/Official/Fonctionnaire/Funcionario/
 Ierēdnis/Pareigūnas/Tisztviselő/Ufficial/Ambtenaar/Urządник/Funcionário/Funcionar/Úradník/Uradnik/Virkamies/Tjä
 nsteman

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

35th MEETING OF THE EEA JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

European Parliament, Strasbourg, [Room S7- SDM Building](#)

Wednesday, 24 November 2010, 15.00 - 18.30

and

Thursday, 25 November 2010, 09.00 - 11.00

List of Participants

Iceland

Mr Árni Thór SIGURDSSON	Left- Green Movement (Vice-President of the EEA JPC)
Ms Valgerdur BJARNADÓTTIR	Social Democratic Alliance
Mr Sigmundur D. GUNNLAUGSSON	Progressive Party
Ms Thorgerdur K. GUNNARSDÓTTIR	Independence Party
Ms Jónína Rós GUDMUNDSDÓTTIR	Social Democratic Alliance
Mr Stígur STEFÁNSSON	Secretary to the delegation

Liechtenstein

Mr Helmuth BUECHEL	Progressive Citizen's Party
Ms Sandra GERBER-LEUENBERGER	Secretary to the delegation

Norway

Mr Svein Roald HANSEN	Labour Party
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Ms Irene JOHANSEN	Labour Party
Ms Laila Marie REIERTSEN	Progress Party
Mr Kåre SIMENSEN	Labour Party
Ms Laila DÅVOY	Christian Democratic Party
Mr Øyvind REKSTAD	Secretary to the delegation
Ms Merethe ELVESTAD	Secretary to the delegation

European Parliament

Mr Pat the Cope GALLAGHER, President of the EEA JPC	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Ireland
Ms Zuzana BRZOBOHATÁ	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, Czech Republic
Mr Indrek TARAND	The Greens–European Free Alliance Parliamentary Group, Estonia
Mr Petru Constantin LUHAN	Group of the European People's Party, Romania
Mr Paul RÜBIG	Group of the European People's Party, Austria
Mrs Diana WALLIS	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, the United Kingdom
Mrs Catherine STIHLER	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, the United Kingdom
Mrs Arlene MCCARTHY	Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, the United Kingdom
Mr Andreas SCHWAB	Group of the European People's Party, Germany
Mrs Britta REIMERS	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, Germany
Mr Søren Bo SØNDERGAARD	Confederal Group of the European United Left - Nordic Green Left, Denmark

Observers

Switzerland

Mr Ignazio CASSIS	Liberal Democratic Party
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Ms Brigitta GADIENT	Civic Democratic Party of Switzerland
Ms Kathy RIKLIN	Christian Democratic Party
Mr Hans KAUFMANN	Swiss People's Party
Mr Raphaël COMTE	Liberal Democratic Party
Ms Marlies BÄNZIGER	Swiss Green Party
Mr Eugen DAVID	Christian Democratic Party
Ms Elena WILDI	Secretary to the delegation
Ms Céline NERNY	Secretary to the delegation
Mr Frei WILLIAM	Mission to the EU

Speakers

Mr Nikulás HANNIGAN	representing the President-in-Office of the EEA Joint Committee and the President-in-Office of the EEA Council
Mr Hubert ROISIN	Counsellor, Belgium, representing the EU President of the EEA Council
Mr Gianluca GRIPPA	representing the EU President of the EEA Joint Committee
Mr Per Sanderud	President of the EFTA Surveillance Authority

EEA JPC Staff

Mr Andri Lúthersson	Senior Officer, ECD, EFTA Secretariat
Ms Margrethe Saxegaard	Senior Officer, ECD, EFTA Secretariat
Mr Lars Erik Nordgaard	Director, ECD, EFTA Secretariat
Mr Michal Malovec	Administrator, European Parliament
Ms Cesarina Dall'Ozzo	Administrative Assistant, European Parliament

Other observers and guests

Ms Bergdís Ellertsdóttir	Deputy Secretary-General, EFTA
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Secretariat

Ms Hrund Hafsteinsdóttir

Senior Officer, ECD, EFTA Secretariat

Mr Thomas Krings

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for
Europe, Deputy Secretary General

Mr Per Heister
Bärbel Dürhager

European People's Party, political advisor
General Secretariat of the Council of the
European Union, Desk Officer