

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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**A5-0097/2003**

26 March 2003

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

on the application by the Republic of Slovenia to become a member of the  
European Union

(AA-AFNS 1-6 – C5-0123/2003 – 2003/0901H(AVC))

Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence  
Policy

Rapporteur: Demetrio Volcic

### ***Symbols for procedures***

- \* Consultation procedure  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*I Cooperation procedure (first reading)  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*II Cooperation procedure (second reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position*  
*majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend*  
*the common position*
- \*\*\* Assent procedure  
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases*  
*covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and*  
*Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- \*\*\*I Codecision procedure (first reading)  
*majority of the votes cast*
- \*\*\*II Codecision procedure (second reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position*  
*majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend*  
*the common position*
- \*\*\*III Codecision procedure (third reading)  
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text*

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission)

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## PROCEDURAL PAGE

By letter of 20 February 2003 the Council requested Parliament's assent pursuant to Article 49 of the EU Treaty to the Republic of Slovenia's application to become a member of the European Union (AA-AFNS 1-6 – 2003/0901H(AVC)).

At the sitting of 7 April 2003 the President of Parliament will announce that he has referred this application, together with the draft Treaty on Accession by the Republic of Slovenia, to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy as the committee responsible, and to all committees interested for their opinions (C5-0123/2003).

At its meeting of 21 January 2003 the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy had appointed Demetrio Volcic rapporteur.

It considered the application for membership, the draft Treaty on Accession, the opinion of the Commission and the draft recommendation at its meeting of 17-19 March 2003.

At this meeting it adopted the draft legislative resolution by 56 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

The following were present for the vote: Elmar Brok, chairman; Christos Zacharakis, vice-chairman; Demetrio Volcic, rapporteur; Alexandros Alavanos (for Sami Naïr), Ole Andreasen, Per-Arne Arvidsson, Alexandros Baltas, André Brie, Véronique De Keyser, Rosa M. Díez González, Hélène Flautre (for Joost Lagendijk), Glyn Ford, Pernille Frahm (for Luigi Vinci), Michael Gahler, Per Gahrton, Gerardo Galeote Quecedo, Jas Gawronski, Vitaliano Gemelli (for Franco Marini), Alfred Gomolka, Vasco Graça Moura (for José Pacheco Pereira), Klaus Hänsch, Magdalene Hoff, Ulpu Iivari (for Catherine Lalumière), Christoph Werner Konrad (for Karl von Wogau), Efstratios Korakas, Armin Laschet, Nelly Maes (for Reinhold Messner), Cecilia Malmström, Pedro Marset Campos, Hugues Martin, Linda McAvan, Emilio Menéndez del Valle, Philippe Morillon, Pasqualina Napoletano, Raimon Obiols i Germà, Arie M. Oostlander, Doris Pack (for Alain Lamassoure), Hans-Gert Poettering (for Geoffrey Van Orden), Jacques F. Poos, Bernd Posselt (for Amalia Sartori), Luís Queiró, Reinhard Rack (for John Walls Cushnahan pursuant to Rules 153(2)), José Ribeiro e Castro (for Jean-Charles Marchiani pursuant to Rules 153(2)), Lennart Sacrédeus (for David Sumberg), Jannis Sakellariou, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Jacques Santer, Jürgen Schröder, Elisabeth Schroedter, Ioannis Souladakis, Ursula Stenzel, Ilkka Suominen, Hannes Swoboda, Charles Tannock, Gary Titley (for Mário Soares), Joan Vallvé, Bob van den Bos, Paavo Väyrynen, Jan Marinus Wiersma and Matti Wuori.

The recommendation was tabled on 26 March 2003.

## DRAFT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

### **Legislative resolution on the application by the Republic of Slovenia to become a member of the European Union (AA-AFNS 1-6 – C5-0123/2003 – 2003/0901H(AVC))**

#### **(Assent procedure)**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the application by the Republic of Slovenia to become a member of the European Union,
  - having regard to the Council's request for Parliament's assent pursuant Article 49 of the EU Treaty (C5-0123/2003),
  - having regard to the opinion of the Commission (COM(2003) 79)<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the draft Treaty on Accession by the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic to the European Union,
  - having regard to Rules 86 and 96(6) of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to its resolution of 9 April 2003 on the conclusions of the Copenhagen enlargement negotiations<sup>2</sup>
  - having regard to the recommendation of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy (A5-0097/2003),
- A. whereas the conditions for the admission of the applicant countries and the adjustments their accession entails are set out in the draft Treaty on Accession, and whereas Parliament should be consulted on any substantial modifications to this Treaty,
- B. whereas this assent will not determine its position on the adjustment of the financial perspective to cater for enlargement according to Article 25 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 6 May 1999, and whereas the figures entered in Annex XV of the draft Treaty on Accession constitute the minimum threshold necessary for the adjustment of the financial perspective,
1. Gives its assent to the application by the Republic of Slovenia to become a member of the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ not yet published

<sup>2</sup> Vote foreseen in plenary on 9 April 2003 (report by Elmar Brok (A5-0081/2003))

2. Instructs its President to forward this assent to the Council and Commission, and to the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the Republic of Slovenia.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

One of the striking facts is that Slovenia has requested a very limited number of transitional periods to be included in the treaty on accession. This shows its determination to start to implement the *acquis* as soon as it becomes a full member of the European Union.

Despite delays in certain sectors, for reasons both within and outside its control, the country meets the accession criteria established at Copenhagen. This can be seen from the Commission's annual reports and also from documents adopted by Parliament.

Since the first report was drawn up the country has made progress in the chapters concerning, *inter alia*, the rule of law, administrative organisation and free competition. Macro-economic stability has been achieved to a large extent. Reforms in various fields have been consolidated in accordance with recommendations from the European Union, so that control can be exercised in accordance with the criteria laid down.

We should mention two sectors in which the European institutions complained of slowness in the past. The first is the duration of judicial procedures, due, according to Ljubljana, to both staff shortages and disputes in civil cases in connection with denationalisation and the restitution of property. The district court of Ljubljana, often a cause for complaint, processed criminal cases in little more than 16 months on average in 2002, whilst civil cases took 16.8 months. This is considerably faster than five years ago.

Another contentious issue is denationalisation. The government in Ljubljana has for the first time set time limits. 25 administrative units should complete the process this year, another 36 in 2004. In only one district (Kocevje), because of specific and complicated problems, has a further year been allowed for the completion of procedures. For years, the rate of restitution was little more than 60%, whereas recently it was said to be 75% or more. Slovenia is campaigning against corruption and has drawn up an institutional programme of prevention.

After a war of words and nerves, Ljubljana and Zagreb have now postponed the debate on the technical details of the remaining issues. Slovenia would like to resolve with Croatia the problem of the Krsko nuclear power station, built with joint funding, in order to meet the growing need for energy. The positions of the two parties are still quite far apart. Intensive diplomatic negotiations are being conducted on a possible common external position to be adopted. Slovenia is in favour of Croatia's applying to join the European Union.

This year the PHARE programme focused on essential functional sectors, such as the correct use of the structural and cohesion funds.

Efforts and financial resources will be needed to provide border facilities in accordance with the Schengen agreements. Slovenia will be the Union's external frontier along its 670 kilometres of border with Croatia and will have to coordinate with Hungary, which will not be an easy task. In the final difficult stage of negotiations on the financial package, compromise was reached with regard to the funding available. In certain sectors Slovenia has sacrificed short-term results in favour of others which will only reveal their potential after a number of years. The European

negotiators realised they had to ensure that Slovenia did not enter the Union as a net contributor. This technical/financial hypothesis has been avoided.

Let us now review a number of points on which those who uphold the interests of the European Union are focusing action and debate, in the hope that the discipline imposed on the members will be helpful:

- The reform of the civil service has created solid bases for State administration.
- Together with the legal framework to combat corruption, legislative provisions on the internal market have become more effective.
- The situation as regards company law and competition law is good, but Slovenia should focus on completing legislative reforms in order to ensure efficiency. This will enable it to face up competition and the foreign market more successfully.
- The foreign debt is small, as is the public deficit, and unemployment is falling, but is an unpredictable variable. In this atmosphere of relative calm, the issue of high inflation remains.
- If it wants to join the euro area, Slovenia will have to devote particular attention to fiscal matters and, of course, a rigorous financial policy.
- In the field of freedom of movement of goods, the country does not have any particular problems. The new standardisation and certification bodies are in operation and will of course need a system to monitor the market. Slovenia will be part of the area of free movement of capital within a relatively short time.
- It must concentrate on the transport sector, an expensive and complex chapter as far as routes are concerned, not least in the interests of the neighbouring transit countries.
- There are no problems as regards the free movement of persons.
- Progress has been made on plant health and veterinary issues thanks to the adoption of new legislation and collaboration with the agency SAPARD. The border areas require particular attention.
- In the environmental sphere the laws adopted have produced a positive result. Special attention needs to be devoted to preventing air and water pollution. Pilot projects have been launched in three areas of the country.

For all these reasons, after years of disciplined and serious work, Slovenia is ready to become part of the European Union. With its new partners Ljubljana will be able to harness its energies to the best advantage and is worthy to occupy the position which it merits for historical and geographical reasons.