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## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to the Commission statement

pursuant to Rule 37(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Françoise Grossetête, Ilkka Suominen, W.G. van Velzen, James E.M. Elles,  
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on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2004

**European Parliament resolution on the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2004**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 57 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the Commission's legislative and work programme for 2004 (COM(2003) 645), the presentation of that programme on 18 November 2003 and the ensuing debate held in the presence of the Council,
  - having regard to the conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003,
- A. having regard to the importance of the following events when looking ahead to 2004:
- 10 new Member States will join the European Union on 1 May 2004 and 10 new Commissioners will be appointed;
  - the Commission is in the last year of its term of office;
  - citizens throughout the EU will vote in the European elections in June;
  - the adoption of a European Constitution,
- B. having regard to the four strategic objectives set by the Commission at the beginning of its term of office, i.e.:
- promoting new forms of governance;
  - stabilising the continent and boosting Europe's voice in the world;
  - drawing up a new economic and social agenda;
  - securing a better quality of life for everyone,
- C. whereas the Brussels European Council of 12 and 13 December 2003 opened the way to multiannual legislative programming by adopting the Council's first three-year strategic programme, in keeping with the conclusions of the 2002 Seville European Council,
- D. having regard to the provisional assessment, by the Commission, of the progress made towards achieving its strategic objectives since the beginning of its term of office,
1. Notes that, for reasons linked to the institutional timetable, this legislative programme deliberately contains only proposals which are essential and which can be implemented in 2004;
  2. Notes that the proposals to be put forward match the political priorities of enlargement, stability, security and sustainable growth, but takes the view, nevertheless, that the Commission has still taken too little action in response to the calls made by the parliamentary committees;
  3. Takes the view that application of the interinstitutional agreement on 'Better lawmaking'

will clear the way for wider-ranging coordination of legislative work among the three institutions, and considers that the Council should be involved in an interinstitutional legislative programme;

4. Takes the view that the links between the Commission's programme and the Council's multiannual strategic programme drawn up in December 2003 are as yet far from clear; calls on the Commission and Council to explain precisely how these two planning processes go together;
5. Notes that the annual legislative and work programme contains a total of 275 legislative and non-legislative proposals, 128 of which are directly linked to the political priorities for 2004, but that only 57 of those 128 are legislative acts; notes that the programme for 2004 largely consists of proposals carried over from previous programmes;
6. Regrets the fact that only roughly half of the proposals announced in the 2003 legislative and work programme were in fact adopted by the Commission; hopes that the 2004 programme will be based on more realistic scenarios;
7. Applauds the Commission's decision to subject all significant legislative proposals to an extended impact assessment; calls on the Commission, however, to draw up indicative timetables for the conclusion of those impact assessments and to inform Parliament and the Council of the outcome, as required by the interinstitutional agreement on 'Better lawmaking';
8. Welcomes the systematic introduction by the Commission of statutory preliminary and extended impact assessment procedures applicable to new proposals, bearing in mind the fact that Parliament and the Council will also be required to assess the impact of their own amendments to proposals;
9. Supports the Commission's efforts to simplify and codify Community legislation;
10. Calls on its parliamentary committees to consider the proposals set out in the legislative and work programme closely with a view to identifying those proposals which must be tackled before the end of the current parliamentary term;
11. Takes the view that, in 2004, it will be necessary to reach agreement with the Commission on an ad hoc procedure governing the various stages in the preparation and presentation of the next legislative programme;
12. Points out that the need to revise the institutional framework of the enlarged European Union, in keeping with the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe, represents one of the major challenges for 2004;
13. Points out, in particular, that the Commission will be required to draw up proposals for the appointment of 10 new Commissioners in the European Union of 25;
14. Deplores the fact that the action plan provides no proper explanation for the Commission's failure to react for so long to the crisis in Eurostat, despite the evidence

which mounted up over the years, and condemns this ‘passivity’, which it regards as a failing for which no Commissioner has yet accepted responsibility;

15. Calls on the Commission to take as a matter of urgency all the measures required to bring an end to the culture of secrecy and indifference surrounding financial control instruments, so that in future all illegal actions can quickly be detected and dealt with; calls on the Commission to submit, by 15 January 2004, detailed proposals regarding ways of establishing OLAF’s full independence vis-à-vis the Commission in its operational activities and to take immediate steps to meet the need for effective communication between Commissioners and their directorates-general, to implement the existing provisions (such as the Code of Conduct for Commissioners and the rules governing relations between the Commission and OLAF) in full and to settle as quickly as possible cases involving whistleblowers, whilst drawing up procedures for their protection;
16. Calls on OLAF to complete all its outstanding investigations concerning Eurostat and to submit its final reports to Parliament as soon as possible, and by 15 January 2004 at the latest;
17. Calls on its committees responsible to hold hearings or similar meetings to scrutinise closely developments concerning the Commission’s accounting system and calls for that step to be accompanied by an assessment, following the consultation of external experts, of the overall stage reached in implementing the financial control instruments which form part of the reform package, in the light of the Eurostat affair;
18. Urges the Commission to ensure that the stability and growth pact, which is central to European economic and budgetary coordination, is implemented correctly and rigorously in order to guarantee the proper functioning of EMU;
19. Reiterates its serious concern at the fact that the Commission should now be discussing future political priorities in connection with a revised financial framework for the post-2006 period; considers that the discussion is relevant, but that no decision should be taken at this stage, in particular given the imminence of the enlargement of the Union (1 May 2004) and the European elections (June 2004); takes the view that the decision must rest with a future Commission, once it has been constituted and has laid down its priorities, and that the final decision will have to be taken by the budgetary authority;
20. Regards it as essential that the Commission should take steps to enforce the *acquis communautaire* in the new Member States and to verify the implementation of the provisions of Community law which deal with the protection of external frontiers;
21. Takes the view that the accession of 10 new Member States, the ongoing negotiations with Romania and Bulgaria, the report on the situation in Turkey and the opinion on Croatia’s membership application together form the key political priority for 2004, but emphasises that, in the current tense and unstable international situation, the new framework created by an enlarged Union with new neighbourhood relations with countries to the east and in the Mediterranean will make closer coordination and tangible progress in the sphere of the CFSP essential with a view to the establishment of an area of security, peace, stability and

prosperity, chiefly involving the Union's new neighbours; welcomes the adoption of a security strategy for the Union and calls on the Commission to implement policies which are consistent with that document;

22. Regrets the fact that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has disrupted and hampered the Barcelona integration process and applauds the ongoing efforts of the Commission and the High Representative for the CFSP to bring about peace in the region;
23. Expresses its conviction that current events in Afghanistan will have a decisive bearing on relations between the West and Islam over the next two decades; thanks the European Commission's delegation to Kabul for its efforts; urges the Commission to consider establishing, in the near future, a European Agency for the Reconstruction of Afghanistan, along the lines of the body set up in Kosovo, with a view to tailoring Community and Member State aid more closely to the needs of the Afghan people;
24. Looks to the Commission to step up cooperation with the social partners with a view to drawing up joint strategies and measures to achieve the employment objectives laid down in Lisbon, in particular greater involvement for the elderly and women on the labour market, and do away with barriers to flexibility on the labour market;
25. Calls for practical proposals and agreements setting out ways of enhancing workers' qualifications and offering them greater incentives to improve their skills, on the basis of arrangements compatible with work;
26. Takes the view that the establishment of an integrated electricity market in an enlarged Europe will improve security of supply, but that further efforts should be made to achieve a satisfactory level of electrical interconnectivity; calls for a new proposal on closer coordination in the sector with a view to preventing blackouts similar to those recently suffered by Italy, Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom;
27. Welcomes the support for innovation, research and development, which are fundamental to European growth and the European Union's Lisbon strategy, in particular the action plan which aims to increase investment in research and development in line with the target of 3% of GDP and to attract more and more human resources to the research sector; points out that specific measures must be taken to meet the needs of innovative SMUs active in Europe;
28. Acknowledges that consideration should be given to the idea of establishing a European Research Council, endowed with adequate resources, with a view to strengthening fundamental research in Europe; takes the view that such a body should give priority to bottom-up approaches, cover all scientific areas and be based on scientific criteria;
29. Welcomes the initiative concerning the 'proposal for a regulation on paediatric medicinal products' and the 'communication on broader cooperation in the sphere of health and care for the elderly', but emphasises that the Commission must implement all the measures required to take account of the increase in life expectancy, a major challenge which the European Union will be required to meet in the near future;

30. Draws attention to the need to promote patient mobility within the EU and to implement a large-scale information campaign on health and eating habits with a view to combating a wide range of medical conditions (cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, etc.) at Community level;
31. Welcomes the thematic strategies incorporated into the legislative programme, such as those outlined in the sixth action programme on the environment, but deplores the Commission's failure to draw up such a strategy on the urban environment;
32. Calls on the Commission to take practical steps to follow up the conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council of 19 and 20 June 2003, which called for the establishment of 'a European diplomacy on environment and sustainable development', and urges the Commission to put forward a specific political strategy in this area; asks to be kept regularly informed, between now and June 2005, about the progress made towards establishing a network of experts, in keeping with the strategy on integrating the environment into external policies adopted in Barcelona;
33. Welcomes the new measures presented by the Commission with a view to completing the internal market, liberalising the various transport sectors and guaranteeing passengers using all modes of transport increased safety; in that connection, points out that the onus is now on the Council to speed up its efforts to adopt common positions on extremely important matters, such as social provisions in the sphere of road transport, the introduction of a system imposing certain restrictions on the use of heavy good vehicles, public service requirements and the award of public service contracts in the sphere of the transport of passengers by rail, road and inland waterway and security requirements for cabin crews;
34. Urges that the new generation of Community programmes in the areas of education, culture, youth and audiovisual policy for the post-2006 period should be programmed in good time in order to ensure continuity in terms of both policy and implementation;
35. Welcomes the Commission's intention to submit the final analysis of the measures taken to achieve the Tampere objectives and points out that, following the Treaty of Nice, the next stage in the establishment of an area of freedom, security and justice provides for the application of the codecision procedure to most measures concerning asylum and immigration;
36. Notes the Commission's determination to set up new cooperation programmes with third countries in the area of immigration, programmes which are central to the fight against clandestine immigration and trafficking in human beings, and urges the Commission to speed up the negotiations on readmission agreements at European level;
37. Draws attention to the need to establish a Community operational structure, as a precursor to a European corps of border guards, with a view to stepping up cooperation on the protection of external frontiers, in particular ahead of the 2004 enlargement;

38. Calls for the development of a new Schengen Information System (SIS) to be carried out in a transparent and democratic manner, which presupposes that Parliament should be consulted and that the provisions on data protection should be complied with;
39. Calls for the timetable for the conclusion of the negotiations on the association agreement with Mercosur to be met, on the understanding that WTO agreements must not be allowed to prejudice the outcome of those negotiations;
40. Welcomes the recent communication from the Commission on the budgetisation of the European Development Fund (EDF); reiterates its long-standing support for the budgetisation of the EDF, which will provide for parliamentary supervision and democratic scrutiny of the EU's financial and technical cooperation with the ACP countries; gives the ACP countries an assurance that, through the exercise of its powers as one arm of the budgetary authority, it will prevent the diversion of funds from previous EDFs to other areas of the EU budget, by means of ringfencing and other appropriate measures;
41. Calls on the Commission to give a firm undertaking to draw up a detailed, comprehensive strategy designed to achieve the UN's millennium development objectives, in particular the elimination of poverty, and the objectives in the spheres of health and education;
42. Welcomes the Peace Facility set up by the European Union to finance peacekeeping operations by the African Union; calls on the Commission to take steps to ensure that prompt use is made of this instrument in the various conflict areas in Africa;
43. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the new Member States.