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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Joseph Daul, Marianne Thyssen and Klaus-Heiner Lehne, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

Martin Schulz, Udo Bullmann and Edit Herczog, on behalf of the PSE Group

Bilyana Ilieva Raeva, on behalf of the ALDE Group

Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Monica Frassoni and Rebecca Harms, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Brian Crowley, on behalf of the UEN Group

on input for the 2008 Spring Council as regards the Lisbon Strategy

B6-0076/2008

European Parliament resolution on input for the 2008 Spring Council as regards the Lisbon Strategy

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission’s strategic package for the Lisbon Strategy comprising a Communication from the Commission to the European Council: Strategic Report on the renewed Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs: launching the new cycle (2008-2010) entitled Keeping up the pace of change (COM(2007)0803) – Part I, the assessment of national reform programmes, a Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: Proposal for a Community Lisbon Programme 2008-2010 (COM(2007)0804), the Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs (2008-2010) (COM(2007)0803) – Part V,
 - having regard the Commission’s communication on Member States and Regions delivering the Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs through EU cohesion policy, 2007-2013 (COM (2007)0798)
 - having regard to the 27 National Lisbon Reform Programmes as presented by the Member States,
 - having regard to the Commission’s communication on The European Interest: Succeeding in the age of globalisation (COM(2007)0581),
 - having regard to the European Council conclusions of March 2000, March 2001, March and October 2005, March 2006 and March 2007,
 - having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 15 November 2007 on the European interest: succeeding in the age of globalisation (B6-0435/2007),
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Commission promised to take full account of the views Parliament expressed in its resolutions concerning Lisbon, and points in particular to the resolution on globalisation adopted in November 2007 in Strasbourg,
- B. whereas the Parliament, in its previous resolutions, has shown strong support for the Lisbon Strategy, and has especially welcomed the refocused approach centred around the Strategy for Jobs and Growth,
- C. whereas there is a strong interrelationship between economic growth, employment, the fight against poverty and social inclusion,
- D. whereas the Union and the Member States have a shared responsibility to address the challenges, opportunities and uncertainties of citizens regarding globalization; whereas the EU must take its political responsibility as a global player and contribute to achieving and

shaping sustainable development in the world in the age of globalisation so that people around the globe can harness the opportunities offered by globalisation,

- E. whereas the Single Market is one important and efficient tool for building a dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy and buttressing Europe's competitive position in the global market in order to improve the quality of life for its citizens,
- F. whereas this resolution, in accordance with the mandate of the European Parliament's Lisbon Coordination Group and respecting the competencies of other EP committees, will not deal with details of ongoing legislation and consultation processes,

General considerations

1. Underlines once again the importance of a vigorous implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, emphasising the interdependence of economic, social and environmental progress in creating a dynamic and innovative sustainable economy;
2. Believes that economic development and future prosperity in Europe depend on the way in which better conditions for Sustainable Growth and job creation are created and the opportunities and challenges emerging from globalisation, demographic change and global environmental threats responded to; believes that the European Union's common tool is the renewed Lisbon Strategy and the integrated guidelines;
3. Believes that in order to guarantee the success of the renewed Lisbon agenda we also need to strengthen Europe's growth, which is today at a low level – some 2% of GDP – and insufficient to create enough employment;
4. Points out that one of the fundamental problems facing the European economy in recent years has been insufficient domestic demand owing to the lack of confidence of consumers and investors, and that increased consumption must come from increases in revenues linked to increases in productivity and employment;
5. Acknowledges that the Union faces many challenges in the period ahead: a population which will start to decline by about 2020, increased economic pressure from global competitors, increased energy prices, climate change and social imbalances; takes the view that Europe must respond to these challenges with the right policy mix;
6. Notes that the Lisbon Agenda is developing positively; notes also, however, that there are still shortcomings in its implementation and no proper understanding of the fact that the European process of development towards more growth, job creation, adequate social security and appropriate environmental protection is still not immune to crises;
7. Points out that as the world's larger exporter and importer of goods, the world's largest exporter of services and the second largest destination and origin of Foreign Direct Investment, the EU is one of the major beneficiaries of the open world economy; considers that, as such, it has a strong responsibility in tackling global issues;
8. Welcomes the global dimension of the Lisbon Process and notes that the Lisbon Strategy represents a European response to the opportunities and risks inherent in globalisation; in

that connection, explicitly emphasises the importance of transatlantic cooperation, as well as of improving cooperation with other major players such as China, India, Brazil and other economic areas of the world;

9. Calls in principle for measures to be taken to combat protectionism both inside and outside the European Union; calls for collaboration and a fair approach in pursuing the Doha Round negotiations;
10. Stresses the undeniable value of a consistent stability and growth policy and the importance of macroeconomic stability as a source of the confidence that is the basis for achieving the Lisbon objectives; points out that in the interest of macro-economic stability the rise in productivity must go hand in hand with fairer distribution and a strengthening of social cohesion; draws attention in this connection to the call for the rise in incomes to keep pace with medium-term growth in productivity;
11. Underlines – like the Commission – that the Member States’ economies are highly interdependent and that the argument for a common reform agenda is strongest in the euro area;
12. Points to the overriding importance of safeguarding the stability of financial markets, and notes that the recent subprime crisis shows the need for the EU to develop oversight measures in order to strengthen the transparency and stability of the financial markets and to better protect customers; requests an evaluation of the current systems and instruments of prudential supervision in Europe and insists on close consultation with the Parliament, leading to clear recommendations on how to improve the stability of the financial system and its ability to provide secure long-term finance for European business;
13. Points out that subsidiarity is important to allow Member States to adapt commonly agreed policies on both security and flexibility to the specific practices and traditions of their national labour markets;
14. Recalls that the cohesion policy is a fundamental principle of the Treaties and a tool for achieving the Lisbon policy objectives for growth and jobs, up to 75 % of cohesion policy funds being earmarked for innovation and Lisbon targets; considers that the leverage of EU cohesion policy in general, and the structural and cohesion funds in particular, must be used for the implementation of the Lisbon Agenda at regional level and that the results of this process need to be monitored closely at the regional and local levels; considers that the current favourable economic development should spur further reforms; stresses the need to examine what effect the implementation of the Lisbon strategy at regional level has had, 2008 being the first year when the preliminary results of the cohesion policy’s earmarking exercise can be evaluated;
15. Considers that scientific and technological research forms one of the key elements of the Lisbon Agenda; agrees on the extreme importance of boosting research and that Member States should take additional measures to meet their R&D investment targets for 2010 by indicating how national R&D investment targets for 2010 will be met and how their R&D strategies will contribute to realising a European research area; emphasises that the necessary move towards a low-carbon economy through the development and implementation of new technologies will create various opportunities for the EU; notes

the huge opportunities afforded to the European economy by the development and roll-out of new technologies and services that will further the decarbonisation of the global economy; welcomes the proposal by the Commission to establish a "fifth freedom" context – freedom of knowledge – in this context, completing the four freedoms of movement of goods, services, people and capital, and to pool EU and Member States' R&D resources to ensure their more effective use;

16. Welcomes recent initiatives and investments in industrial and research policy; in this context, welcomes the European Institute of Innovation and Technology and Galileo as an efficient means of combining technology innovation needs with industry's research agenda; welcomes the European GNSS programmes (Galileo and EGNOS) as key EU projects; underlines the economic and public merits of the programmes and the benefits of new services and markets;
17. Considers that Networks of Excellence (NoE) are needed in order to secure Europe's leading position in the economic and technological fields; believes that the Member States and regions should support the development of clusters of excellence and measures to encourage competition and cooperation among them in order to boost further the culture of innovation; believes that the Commission, Member States and regional and local authorities should take further steps actively to support closer cooperation between public authorities, research institutions, universities and industry;
18. Underlines the importance of Europe's businesses, citizens and authorities successfully completing their transition to the digital era and truly achieving the knowledge-based society and economy called for in the Lisbon Agenda; calls for science and technology to be further developed in the everyday lives of citizens and for an inclusive knowledge society for all to be promoted;
19. Urges the Member States' governments and their regional administrations, as the biggest employers, buyers and service providers in the Single Market, to drive innovation by creating pilot markets for innovative products and services;
20. Notes that Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in new job creation and the exploitation of new research; strongly endorses the Commission's proposed Small Business Act as a vehicle for creating opportunities for SMEs, encouraging the "think small first" culture and setting out an integrated policy approach in order to unlock the growth potential at every stage of the life-cycle of SMEs;
21. Highlights the potential to help SMEs by reducing their regulatory burden, improving their access to public contracts and developing a more favourable regime for funding and exploiting innovation;
22. Acknowledges that within the EU innovative technologies must be more swiftly translated into new products and services; supports, therefore, the Commission's demand for a 'knowledge triangle' made up of research, education and innovation; expects more effective investment in new skills, lifelong learning and modern education/training systems;
23. Welcomes the fact that the Commission has undertaken to reduce the regulatory burden

and is aiming at better regulation and encouraging Member States to adopt equal measures without putting in danger citizens' participatory rights and consumer protection; expects the Commission and the Council to live up to their commitments outlined in the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Lawmaking; notes with deep concern that a number of recent significant legislative proposals from the Commission have been put forward without prior impact assessments or proper evaluation of the effects of earlier legislation in the same area;

24. Underlines in this context the need for a new, comprehensive external and trade policy approach that focuses on enabling Europe to take the lead in setting rules and standards worldwide, facilitating European exports and ensuring that imports meet necessary standards; emphasises that Europe must maximise its potential as a springboard for businesses entering global markets and as an attractive location for investors; requests, furthermore, that all EU bilateral or regional trade agreements under negotiation include enforceable provisions on the implementation of core labour standards and other aspects of decent work, as well as of multilateral environmental standards;
25. Reiterates once again its belief that, in order to create a society responsive to change, the role of a more inclusive style of economic decision-making will be crucial; recalls the European Council's decision stressing that a high level of social protection was central to the Lisbon Strategy; reaffirms that it is unacceptable that people should be living below the poverty line and in a position of social exclusion; reaffirms that all European citizens should have access to decent work and a decent life, even after retirement; supports further action to reinforce policies to combat poverty and social exclusion, with a view to adopting a comprehensive approach to renewing the decisive momentum given to the elimination of poverty by 2010 and to enabling all European citizens to gain access to their fundamental rights; highlights the legally binding incorporation of the European Charter of fundamental rights in the Lisbon Reform Treaty; asks for a commitment by the Spring European Council to an ambitious social agenda with a concrete impact on the results of the Lisbon Strategy;
26. Reiterates – given that social and territorial cohesion is one of the essential components of the Single Market – the importance of boosting citizens' confidence by promoting social and environmental objectives common to the Member States, such as high-quality jobs, equality of opportunity, and protection of health and the environment, while respecting European cultural diversity; calls on the Commission to ensure that the EU performs its protective function in these areas and that regulatory competition among the Member States is avoided;
27. Believes that further integration of the transport sector into the Lisbon Strategy is necessary; insists that priority be given under the new Integrated Policy Guidelines to sustainable transport, logistics and the development of the trans-European networks, and calls upon the Member States to ensure that the national plans submitted at the forthcoming spring 2008 European Council reflect these priorities;

The internal market and strategic responses to globalisation

28. Stresses that a smoothly functioning internal market and a well-balanced social market economy are the strongest competitive advantage for Europe; points out that for

third-country investors the internal market offers advantages such as a level playing field and free movement, but that access to the internal market should be accompanied by a similar openness to EU investors on the part of third countries with developed and emerging economies, which is the key factor in attracting foreign investment and increasing trade with third countries; notes that, in addition, we need to create the best framework conditions for European enterprises, including better regulation, good governance, sound and fair competition, efficiently functioning venture-capital markets and commercialisation of the results of research and innovation;

29. Urges the Member States to place the EU's competitiveness at the heart of their policy-making and to make the completion of the Single Market a priority, particularly through timely and appropriate implementation of Single Market directives and the removal of unjustified barriers to national markets; recalls, however, that the establishment of the Single Market was based on competition, cooperation and solidarity, which remain the basic preconditions for further achievements of the Single Market in the twenty-first century; stresses that it must be developed through fair competition rules, efficient fiscal and social protection systems and a high level of consumer protection;
30. Emphasises the need to complete the Single Market and carry out the necessary reforms; calls on the Member States to endorse the remaining measures necessary to create a single EU market in services, including financial services, and to ensure that their national regulators encourage new providers and products while ensuring a level playing field and appropriate transparency and legal certainty for the interests of individual investors; takes the view that new policy initiatives to complete the Single Market should be more driven by an analysis of the impact they have on markets, economic sectors, the environment and the social sphere;
31. Underlines the need for an adequate level of protection of intellectual property rights and supports the initiative towards an affordable, secure and efficient patents system which would give incentives for investment and research efforts and foster capacity for innovation, in particular for SMEs; urges all three institutions to work together towards a political consensus on a real improvement of the patents system, whereby citizens can profit from new products and services at affordable prices;
32. Notes that market-based instruments (MBIs) include a wide range of policy tools that are increasingly being used to achieve environmental objectives; takes the view that MBIs such as taxes, charges and emissions trading can foster an efficient allocation of natural resources and can contribute, in this context, to achieving the goals of the Lisbon agenda;
33. Reiterates its view on the benefits of shifting the tax burden from labour to environmental degradation as an effective way to address both environmental and employment issues, and is of the opinion that the burden on labour must be diminished in order to create more jobs and fight the black economy;
34. Notes that the objectives of energy supply security and providing Europe's citizens with reasonably priced, sustainable mobility and energy and maintaining fair prices can be achieved via the same strategy as ambitious climate protection;
35. Calls on the Commission, in consequence, to implement consistently and rapidly the

decisions of the 2007 Spring Summit and to make renewable energy and energy efficiency the priorities in reality of a common energy policy;

36. Point out that a major task of the EU and the other industrialised countries is to switch to a low-energy-intensive economy based on renewable sources of energy, and that an efficient way of approaching this is the application of technologies which are already at hand, but for which we need bold policy action in order to implement them, including incentives and multilaterally agreed sanctions applying to those countries which are not ready to bear their share of the burden; emphasises that the necessary shift towards a sustainable, low-energy-intensive and low-carbon economy by means of the development and implementation of new technologies will create various opportunities for the EU;
37. Emphasises the importance of transport policy in fighting climate change and addressing a broader set of environmental concerns, advocates policies which reduce unnecessary transport through a variety of measures and calls for Trans-European Transport Networks to be subject to a proper strategic environmental impact assessment;
38. Calls on the Member States rapidly to expand the interconnected, interoperable Trans-European Transport Networks with particular regard to the needs in the new Member States within an efficient, sustainable and environmentally friendly transport policy; calls on the Commission and the Member States to apply the appropriate policy mix in order fully to exploit the potential of environmentally friendly, intelligent transport systems and technological innovations;
39. Points out that it is, therefore, crucial to ensure that future demand for logistics services is compatible with a smaller environmental impact and reduced greenhouse gas emissions; takes the view that sustainable transport relies on the ability of political decision-makers at the European, national and regional levels to provide efficient incentives for transport buyers, transporters and vehicle manufacturers to continue their efforts to create a more environmentally friendly logistics market;

The labour market and investment in people

40. Recognises that the EU Strategy for Growth and Jobs is showing benefits, but stresses at the same time that not all EU citizens have benefited from these results; stresses that in order to face globalisation and the demographic challenge it is of the utmost importance to provide people with the necessary skills and opportunities in order attract more people into the labour market and make work a real option for everyone, especially through measures targeting people who are furthest away from the labour market;
41. Stresses that in order to ensure free movement and mobility on the labour market the Council needs to adopt the directives on the organisation of working time, working conditions for temporary workers and portability of pension rights and to revise the European Work Council directive without delay; stresses that the removal of barriers to mobility on the European labour market allows greater protection for the European workforce; notes that the EU must make an effort to explain to citizens the benefits of an approach that effectively combines enlargement, integration, solidarity and labour mobility;

42. Reaffirms that Europe cannot afford the present high unemployment figures; notes that the European social model will not remain untouched by the upheavals that are happening worldwide. Takes the view that, in order to face demographic challenge and secure sustainable public finances, Europe must pursue reforms of the labour markets and welfare systems so as to strengthen the incentives to work and provide people with the opportunities and skills to cope with change and facilitate their return to paid work. Points out that, in order to maintain its competitiveness on the world scene, the EU must undertake numerous reforms; believes that the level of trust between enterprises and workers that is needed for this course of action will increase as the social dialogue intensifies; underlines the importance of implementing the agreed common principles of flexicurity in a comprehensive and balanced way for both employees and employers;
43. Stresses that flexible working is increasingly demanded by both employers and employees, and that, in the face of the challenge of demographic change, it is a proven way to increase female participation, as well as to extend the working lives of older people; recalls that education, qualifications and training form part of high-quality employment and that attention needs to be paid to social incentives for families, including childcare infrastructure, which is one of the preconditions for increasing the labour participation of women; supports the adoption of a balanced set of common principles regarding flexicurity, combining flexibility and security for employees and employers on the labour market; encourages the Member States to mainstream these common principles in their NRP consultation with the social partners, and highlights the central role of work-life balance measures, the promotion of equal opportunities for all, training and retraining, active labour market policies, adequate social protection and the breakdown of labour market segmentation by ensuring employment rights for all workers;
44. Acknowledges the contribution of flexible and efficiently functioning labour markets to social inclusion through the creation of employment opportunities for all groups in society; urges the Member States, therefore, to liberalise employment regulations and invest in training and active labour market policies so as to create the best possible conditions for high employment and labour mobility;
45. Notes with concern the trend towards widening inequality of income and wealth in the Member States; believes that such a trend should be reversed by appropriate national and European action to achieve a more cohesive society and to ensure that citizens perceive that they are benefiting from growth;
46. Notes that some Member States have introduced the concept of a minimum wage; suggests that other Member States might benefit from studying their experience;
47. Welcomes the Commission Community Lisbon Programme 2008-2010 in that it proposes a more prioritised programme with only ten key objectives, which can be delivered during the period 2008-2010; underlines, however, that the major opportunity offered by the Lisbon Strategy is that of interconnecting different reform necessities and economic, environmental and employment instruments into one reform agenda; calls on the Commission, therefore, to stick to this coherent and integrative policy-mix approach and not to dismantle it by a move towards isolated policy measures;

Measuring progress and monitoring Lisbon

48. Welcomes the European Commission's efforts to reduce bureaucracy, in particular with a view to helping small and medium-sized undertakings, and to improve legislative impact assessment; at the same time, deplores the fact that Parliament and the Commission have still not reached agreement on the type of impact assessment required; in that connection, reiterates its call for independent, external scrutiny of impact assessment;
49. Welcomes the Commission's target of reducing the administrative burden on business; looks forward to receiving concrete indications of how this target is being achieved while ensuring conditions of good governance; stresses that all levels of government can contribute to achieving this target and should therefore be involved in related policy decisions; calls, in connection with reducing bureaucracy and simplifying European legislation, for clear monitoring with a view to determining to what extent the leeway offered by European legislative acts is actually exploited by the Member States to take account of national specificities and innovation bottlenecks when transposing them;
50. Considers that Member States, together with stakeholders at national, regional and local level, are the main actors in delivering the Lisbon goals; points out that those countries which are open to external competition, implementing reforms and pursuing budgetary balance, as well as high-quality public and private investment, are the ones that have grown the most and have created the most employment; regrets the still weak visibility of the Lisbon Strategy in the national politics of many EU countries; takes the view that the mobilisation of all economic stakeholders is essential to ensuring its effective implementation; in particular, believes that a better involvement of social partners, national parliaments, regional and local authorities, and civil society will improve the results of the Lisbon Strategy and enhance the public debate on appropriate reforms; supports the Commission's proposal to the Member States to deepen the collaboration with national and regional parliaments, while providing for annual debates on the implementation of their NRPs;
51. Stresses the importance of the commitment of regional and local authorities and stakeholders to both the range and the innovative character of achievements; welcomes in this context the strong interest of the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions in monitoring the Lisbon Strategy;
52. Recalls that the Integrated Guidelines provide an important instrument of coordination and a common framework for diverse Member States to pursue their own national reform agendas; considers that analysis and feedback from Member States show that the guidelines are working, but that improvement is nevertheless needed when it comes to adapting to new economic and employment conditions as well as following up (benchmarking) the Member States; calls for more comprehensive application and implementation of indicators and targets;
53. Welcomes the country reports drawn up by the European Commission; calls, however, for a more systematic approach which highlights successes as well as shortcomings; supports the Commission's proposal to introduce particular 'points to watch' as part of multilateral surveillance, also providing a chance to improve national policy responses;

54. Regards the lack of proper monitoring as a major obstacle to well-informed policy choices; underlines in this respect that much better use could be made of the expertise and knowledge available within the European decentralised agencies in the fields of their competencies;
55. Welcomes, therefore, the 2006 Council's decision to remedy the lack of monitoring data and to have the Committee of the Regions draft its 'Growth and Jobs Strategy' monitoring exercise, which involved 104 regions and cities of the EU sharing their views on the implementation of the Lisbon policy – a study to be presented to the 2008 Spring Council; underlines that this study shows whether the Structural Funds' earmarking provision helps channel a greater share of Structural Fund expenditure towards innovation and environmental goals; awaits the evaluation in this study of the added value of the regionalisation of the Lisbon Strategy;
56. Believes that it is not at all self-evident how to measure the success of the Lisbon agenda or, more generally speaking, which indicators would be appropriate ways to measure 'progress'; takes the definite view, however, that monitoring successes and failures cannot be restricted to economic indicators such as GNI alone, since GNI is – at best – an indicator of wealth creation over a given period, but does not even give reliable information about the level of wealth in a society, and is far from giving any hint of the social and environmental costs at which additional wealth creation comes;
57. States that we need to develop and apply a multidimensional approach to assessing human wellbeing beyond the realm of GDP/GNI; welcomes, therefore the OECD deliberations at its 2nd World Forum 'Measuring and Fostering the Progress of Societies' held this year in Istanbul and the discussions at the 'Beyond Growth' conference held in the European Parliament by invitation of the Commission at the beginning of December 2007, because reliable data are an important basis for informed political choices;
58. Welcomes, therefore, the work undertaken by various Commission DGs in developing new qualitative indicators; urges that these indicators – whether they relate to the social dimension, like the poverty indicator, or the environmental dimension, like the biodiversity indicator – be used in upcoming evaluations of the National Lisbon Programmes and incorporated in the Commission's monitoring, thereby creating a more complete set of indicators to measure the success of Lisbon;
59. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Parliaments of the Member States and candidate countries.