MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission


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European Parliament resolution on the Parliament’s priorities for the Commission Work Programme 2016
(2015/2729(RSP))

The European Parliament,


– having regard to the Framework Agreement on relations between the European Parliament and the Commission¹, in particular Annex IV thereto,

– having regard to the Commission Communication on Better regulation for better results - An EU agenda (COM(2015)0215),

– having regard to Rule 37(3) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas the EU and its Member States continue to struggle with the deepest economic and social crisis since its foundation; whereas stagnating economies, high unemployment, declining social and labour rights, and rising socio-economic inequalities demand a fundamental policy shift away from the policies currently pursued by the Commission towards policies that strengthen the European Union and the Member States’ efforts to create sustainable economic growth and full employment and to combat poverty, social exclusion and income inequalities;

B. whereas the European Commission failed to adequately assess the root causes of the current crisis, including the architectural flaws and goals of the EMU; whereas the debt burden that has resulted from these flaws is massively disproportionate, with some countries still profiting while others have been forced into serious depression; whereas the Commission continues to pursues neo-liberal and austerity-oriented policies; whereas these policies have resulted in rising unemployment, poverty, deep wage cuts, a higher pension age and lower public spending in areas such as education, culture and health; whereas this policy will continue to compress demand and pave the way for the introduction of a radical privatisation programme;

C. whereas the European Commission’s response to the economic, social and democratic crisis, such as the economic governance framework, has permanently removed policy choices from sovereign and democratically elected governments and national parliaments, prevents democratic control by the peoples of Europe, and establishes permanent austerity;

D. whereas the irreconcilability of the European political debate after the Greek general election ignores the fact that people rejected the Troika memoranda in a democratic way; whereas the European institutions should respect, without the unacceptable blackmail that is being imposed, the decision made by the Greek people to move

¹ OJ L 304, 20.11.2010, p. 47.
towards development, growth and social cohesion, putting an end to the counter-productive and socially devastating austerity policy imposed by the Troika memorandum;

E. whereas the Five Presidents’ report represents a coordinated effort to further institutionalise austerity in the EU and the Member States;

F. whereas the Commission’s response to the ‘Lux Leaks’ scandal is completely insufficient; whereas an important issue of social justice still needs to be addressed for the reason that while the people of Europe are suffering from austerity programmes and neoliberal structural reforms, secret tax agreements, global tax evasion and the transfer of profits to tax havens remains perfectly legal;

G. whereas the tax systems are designed to favour big business rather than ordinary citizens; whereas austerity and harsh fiscal discipline measures, alongside heavy losses of government revenue resulting from tax evasion and avoidance, put further pressure on Member States’ budgets and undermine the interests of taxpayers and workers in the Union;

H. whereas over 30 000 persons have died at sea in the past twenty years while trying to reach European shores; whereas the EU and its Member States contribute to nurturing the criminal and dangerous business of human smuggling by building fences and increasingly sealing off their external borders against migrants and refugees, without providing possibilities for safe and legal access to the EU;

I. whereas the climate crisis continues to pose a threat to the stability, health and livelihood of societies all over the world, as well as to animal welfare and biodiversity; whereas the EU’s contribution to a new international climate change agreement at COP21 is insufficient; whereas the need for real changes to the production system is not addressed;

J. whereas the EU needs an ambitious Work Programme with which it can create a sustainable and inclusive economy and is aimed at employment policies with social and labour rights, addressing the problem of millions of unemployed or underemployed people in the European Union, and at a high level of public services, while protecting the environment;

K. whereas the budgetary choices made by the EU do not reflect the priorities needed to stimulate sustainable, qualitative and socially balanced growth;

L. whereas there is enormous popular resistance against austerity policies and the growing democratic deficit of the EU decision-making procedure and of the EU institutions; whereas, instead of respecting people’s demands for a radical change away from neoliberal policies, the Commission is joining those political forces that continue to impose austerity policies on the Member States;

M. whereas there is a need for greater transparency, openness and democratisation, including stronger participation by citizens;
PART 1

KEY PRIORITIES

1. Urges the Commission to present a Work Programme that addresses the major challenges the EU is faced with today, such as stagnating economies, the threat of deflation, high unemployment, declining social and labour rights, rising socio-economic inequalities and social exclusion, high public and external debt, as well as the climate crisis; is deeply concerned that the Commission will continue the policies of fiscal consolidation, structural reform and deregulation; asserts that the economic, social, climate and political crisis can only be overcome by a radical new policy that puts people and the environment, including animal welfare, at the centre of all policies, instead of the interests of the financial markets;

2. Underlines the fact that the level of public and external debt in the EU peripheral countries is among the biggest in the world – a consequence of the asymmetric nature of the integration process; recalls that this debt has been the pretext for the imposition of austerity measures, whose real consequences are increased poverty and debt; considers it imperative to face the burden of debt, renegotiating (restructuring and substantially reducing) it and bringing it to sustainable levels, as a matter of urgency and of elementary justice;

3. Strongly rejects the Five Presidents’ report as it offers no way out of the prevailing austerity narrative, but proposes instead to deepen existing policies including increased competitiveness and structural convergence, imposing strict fiscal policies and austerity; believes that the proposals on social cohesion and social indicators, as well as democratic accountability and transparency, are merely a pretext for further binding the Member States to one model for economic and fiscal policies;

4. Takes the view that the Stability Pact, the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the EMU, and the economic governance legislation, such as the Six-pack and Two-pack and the Euro-plus Pact, need to be revoked; urges the Commission to take the initiative of a radical shift in macro-economic policy, with a view to ensuring democratic accountability, transparency and the ability of Member States to pursue policies that address their respective needs, including socially balanced fiscal stimulus measures;

5. Welcomes the commitment to accession to the renewed European Social Charter; calls on the Commission to put forward without delay a proposal for accession to the Charter as a first step towards better social and labour rights;

6. Deeply deplores the continued attempts by the EU institutions to impose austerity measures on Greece in the face of the will of the Greek people as expressed in the January 2015 elections; insists that the European institutions should respect the decision made by the Greek people to move towards development, growth and social cohesion, putting an end to the counter-productive and socially devastating austerity policy imposed by the Troika memoranda;

7. Rejects the agreement on the EFSI as it intends to directly finance the private sector with public funds, privatises profits and socialises risks, and lacks democratic control;
expresses deep concern, moreover, that the EFSI will lead to further privatisation of services of general interest; stresses that the EFSI should be replaced by a comprehensive ‘European Investment Programme for Sustainable Development, Employment and Social Inclusion’ – which can be democratically controlled – in order to stimulate qualitative and socially balanced growth based on a fairer distribution of wealth; stresses that no investment programme can replace a socially, ecologically and territorially balanced cohesion policy which strengthens the region’s potential and promotes sustainable structural change;

8. Is extremely concerned that the Commission’s proposal for a Capital Market Union advocates reviving securitisation for SMEs, among others; stresses that deregulation of the financial markets is one of the main causes of the economic crisis; reiterates the need to reinforce the role of the public financial sector, including by nationalisation; insists that the banking sector should promote economic development, in particular productive and job-creating investments, and support MSMEs and the social and cooperative sector;

9. Believes there is a need to improve the quality of EU law-making; insists, however, that the Better Regulation agenda and REFIT should not undermine the democratic process by circumventing the European Parliament’s rights as a co-legislator, or serve as a pretext for deregulation that weakens social protection, consumer protection, environmental standards, animal welfare standards and social dialogue; therefore rejects the proposed expert committee;

10. Urges the Commission to ensure instead that all future legislation is subject to a social and fundamental rights impact assessment and to include sunset clauses to ensure that EU laws are regularly reviewed;

11. Insists that the Commission and the Member States show real political determination in taxing the actual holders of wealth and that a comprehensive strategy be developed with concrete and effective legislative measures, such as banning tax havens and free ports, establishing a European and global wealth registry, strengthening economic substance requirements, taxing profits at their source, revoking the licences of banks which continue to facilitate tax dodging and reversing the downsizing of public tax administration;

12. Regrets that the response announced by the Commission to the ‘Lux Leaks’ scandal is insufficient; urges the Commission, as a minimum, to include in its tax package an obligation to make tax rulings public in order to ensure transparency and scrutiny, as well as country-to-country reporting based on the CRD IV rules for banks; regrets that the Commission is further weakening the protection of whistle-blowers and employees through the Trade Secrets Directive; urges the Commission and Member States to ensure that whistle-blowers are legally and materially protected when they can reasonably be assumed to be protecting public interests;

13. Urges the Commission to take a genuinely holistic approach to migration policy and to propose a completely new migration policy that provides for safe and legal ways to access the EU for all women, men and children in need of protection or who seek family reunification, and for non-qualified migrant workers, as defended by the UNHCR; takes note of the Commission’s proposals for both the relocation and resettlement of asylum-
seekers that are part of the European Agenda on Migration; calls, however, for a more ambitious proposal that would include the immediate issuing of humanitarian visas for asylum-seekers at Member States’ embassies and consular offices, as well as the introduction of a mandatory resettlement programme at EU level instead of the current weak voluntary resettlement programme;

14. Opposes the TTIP, CETA and TiSA agreements and expresses deep concerns regarding the general orientation given by the Commission to the EU’s international trade policy, in particular its lack of coherence with the key goals of creating jobs, tackling poverty, ensuring a sustainable economy, controlling speculation (especially speculation on food), protecting public health, animal health and welfare, sustainable agriculture and the environment, and ensuring cultural diversity;

15. Welcomes the Commission’s goal of being at the forefront of the digital revolution; stresses, however, that the internet is not merely an instrument to enforce the single market strategy; highlights that digitalisation has changed the whole of society – how it produces, to communicates, lives and governs – and all sectors from smart grid energy systems to the healthcare system; emphasises that the digital revolution is also a cultural and political issue regarding how digitalisation can bring about a new democratic model based on knowledge-sharing and inclusion, rather than it being reduced to an issue of economic infrastructure, power and manipulation; strongly believes that net neutrality, data protection and a common system for copyrights and intellectual property rights should be the main focal points in order to make the digital revolution a democratic revolution;

16. Emphasises finally the fact that the current economic and social crisis is also the result of the Commission’s neoliberal policies of promoting deregulated financial markets, of liberalised markets in products and services and of the increasing financialisation of the economy, as well as of reducing public investment and increasing labour market deregulation; stresses the absolute need for alternative social and economic policies that address people’s own choices for development;

PART 2

SECTOR-SPECIFIC POLICY POSITIONS ON THE COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMME 2016

A socially balanced policy for jobs, growth and investment

17. Urges the Commission to propose a ‘European Investment Programme for Sustainable Development, Employment and Social Inclusion’ that can restore a sustainable and inclusive economy, which has as its aim employment policies with social and labour rights, addressing the problem of millions of unemployed or underemployed people in the EU;

18. In this context, calls on the Commission to put forward without delay legislation that enables additional public investment in the EU of at least 2% of GDP annually, based on national investment programmes;

19. Regrets the short-term and half-measured approach pursued by the Commission in
dealing with youth unemployment; calls on the Commission to intervene on the long-term drivers of youth employment, with a strong emphasis on creating sustainable quality jobs for young people, including through a strong rights-based approach;

20. Calls on the Commission to revise the rules on state aid in order to enable state intervention to enhance socially and environmentally beneficial projects, and to help SMEs and industries in difficulties by contributing to reconstructing their production capacities, which have been heavily hit by the crisis;

21. Emphasises that regional policy is an indispensable tool for promoting economic and social cohesion, with the principal objectives of reducing disparities between regions, in particular the poorer and outermost regions, promoting real convergence, and encouraging growth and employment; rejects the Commission’s approach of subordinating cohesion policy to European economic governance, as well as the use of macroeconomic conditionality in the Stability and Growth Pact as a requirement for access to cohesion policy and regional development funds; insists that cohesion policy should not be used as an instrument of financial punishment if a region or Member State rejects the policy of deregulation and privatisation;

22. Demands that the Horizon 2020 investment programme should not finance the implementation of the EFSI;

A digital policy that protects the interests and rights of citizens

23. Stresses that the Internet belongs to the public domain and that ensuring the principle of net neutrality must be at the heart of the EU policy;

24. Notes that citizens’ trust in the internet is pivotal to the success of the digital society and economy; believes that cyber security is important, but that freedom from suspicion is equally important for citizens; calls on the Commission and Member States, therefore, to ensure that privacy and private data on the internet are protected from public and private bodies alike;

25. Takes the view, given the already increasingly precarious working conditions in the digital economy, that the Digital Union strategy needs to be complemented by safeguard measures in order to ensure decent working conditions in this sector; believes that a ‘fair work’ label for software products (such as games and software applications) could serve as an initial step towards this end;

A new sustainable climate policy and a socially just Energy Union

26. Believes the climate crisis is the result of a flawed energy-intensive production system and that the solution to climate change cannot be left to the market, but demands a radical change in production methods and consumption; calls on the Commission to rethink its climate policy and to integrate climate change policy into all its policies;

27. Regrets the lack of ambition as regards binding targets shown to date by the Commission, especially with regard to the COP 21 in Paris; believes that an up-scaling of climate ambition is urgently required in order for the European Union to remain a leader in climate change negotiations, in the use of renewable energy, in encouraging
green job creation and in contributing to a fair share of global action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

28. Takes note of the promise to table the legislative proposals to implement the 2030 Climate and Energy package by the end of 2015; reminds President Juncker of his commitment to implementing a 40% greenhouse gas emission reduction objective, a 30% energy efficiency objective and a 30% share of renewables in the energy mix;

29. Asks the Commission to come forward with binding sustainability criteria for energy use and biomass; further asks the Commission to come forward with proposals that tackle the emission of greenhouse gases from intensive livestock farming, as these have a far greater impact on climate change than other greenhouse gases;

30. Reiterates its opposition to the proposal for an Energy Union as this will promote privatisation and increase inequality; believes energy should be a public good, and that public control is key to ensuring a green revolution in the energy sector;

31. Takes note of the promise to table a more ambitious legislative proposal on the Circular Economy package by the end of 2015;

32. Stresses the role of the Habitats and Birds Directives and rejects any attempt to jeopardise them; stresses also that any review of the existing legislation should aim to update and reinforce it rather than weaken it;

Protecting workers’ rights in a socio-economically balanced internal market

33. Urges the Commission to use the upcoming targeted review of the Posting of Workers Directive as an opportunity to reinforce workers’ rights against social dumping;

34. Believes that mobility should be a choice and not a necessity; reiterates that the Commission should focus on creating quality jobs where people live, and that these should include social and labour rights, rather than on increasing mobility; insists that the forthcoming Mobility Package protects all workers’ social and labour rights;

35. Condemns the intention of the Commission to withdraw the Maternity Leave directive; deeply regrets the Commission’s decision to withhold the agreement of the social partners on health and safety for hairdressers as this undermines the social dialogue in the EU; urges the Commission to move forward on these proposals and to update the legislation on occupational health and safety without delay;

36. Points out that it is essential to provide greater support to cooperatives and to micro and small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in order to boost their activities within a stable business environment, minimise the effect of dominant market positions occupied by large companies and conglomerates, and help MSMEs and cooperatives to be set up and to grow;

37. Calls for a regionally balanced approach to industrial policy in order to create a diversified industrial base in all Member States and regions, which is crucial to guaranteeing high levels of employment and activity across the EU;
Democratic economic and monetary policies

38. Strongly believes that the architecture of economic governance and the EMU is opaque and undemocratic; insists that the Stability and Growth Pact be replaced with a real Employment and Development Pact, based on social and environmental criteria that are of benefit to all people in the EU; calls further for an intergovernmental conference with the aim of repealing the Fiscal Compact and advocates its immediate suspension until the realisation of this conference;

39. Considers that the Banking Union legislation serves only the interests of the big financial capital in the EU and infringes basic democratic principles; defends the repeal of the Banking Union legislation and the need to ensure democratic public control over the banking system;

40. Demands a fundamental change in the statute and mandate of the ECB in order to ensure its political and democratic control by the Member States on an equal footing; believes it is essential to give back to Member States the power to decide on crucial economic policies such as monetary policy; further believes it is necessary to transform the ECB into a primary lender, which can act as a normal central bank and thus stimulate the economy in times of deflation and recession; in this context, insists that the ECB and the EIB should finance public investment directly to support the real economy rather than new asset price bubbles;

41. Reiterates its call for the immediate termination of the Troika system in the countries where it is still in place, since it lacks legitimacy; demands that the Commission undertakes a thorough and transparent evaluation of the various economic governance measures, including the macro-economic adjustment programmes, prescribed by the Troika, taking into account the criticism expressed by critical economists as well as by Troika members themselves;

42. Deplores, and calls for an immediate end to, the unfair tax policies, including unjust and regressive water taxes, which are being imposed in Member States under fiscal adjustment programmes, and which violate the principle of proportional equality and progressiveness of taxation, as low-income households in particular are affected disproportionately by the measures;

A new fair trade policy

43. Expresses deep concerns regarding the general orientation given by the Commission to the EU international trade policy, in particular its lack of coherence with the key goals of creating jobs, tackling poverty, ensuring a sustainable economy, controlling speculation (especially speculation on food), protecting public health, animal health and welfare, sustainable agriculture and the environment, and ensuring cultural diversity;

44. Opposes the mandates granted by the Council to the Commission for the negotiation of comprehensive free trade agreements (FTAs) such as the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA), which pose a serious threat to food security inter alia, and which foresees the inclusion of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS); urges the Commission to stop these international trade negotiations;
45. Recalls that the impact studies commissioned by the Commission, in particular those concerning TTIP, TiSA and CETA, promising jobs and wealth for all, present serious failures and lack credibility because the economic models used are obsolete; calls on the Commission to use more credible economic models, and to verify the results of the FTAs that have already entered into force, and to compare them with the studies of the impact assessments;

46. Underlines the fact that any trade agreement must be conditional on the safeguarding of current levels of regulation of labour, environmental and social rights protection and safeguards on public procurement and the provision of services of public interest, including the right of states to adopt higher standards in the future in these areas; insists that any form of ISDS be excluded from trade agreement negotiations, in order to maintain democratic control over said regulations;

47. Rejects secrecy in international trade deals, and calls on the Commission to make public all negotiating documents to parliamentarians and to all interested citizens; calls for a public and democratic debate with all relevant stakeholders, in particular trade unions and civil society representatives, to ensure adequate monitoring of the implications of the Commission’s free trade agenda;

48. Considers that the accelerated launching of new free trade agreements is aimed at avoiding real approaches to solving the crisis, such as the reduction of economic inequalities inside the EU, the limitation of abuses by corporate companies and investors, the audit and reduction of public debt, and the necessary fight against tax avoidance and tax evasion;

49. Recalls, that following the Member States’ and Parliament’s position, the Commission agreed on the principle of the ‘cultural exception’, as contained in the UN convention on cultural diversity, according to which culture should be treated differently from other commercial products, and cultural goods and services should be mainly left out of the negotiations; takes the view that this should include Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) and the main issues of the AVMS Directive, public subsidies, financing obligations for broadcasters (especially to support European movie productions and distribution), co-production agreements, language policy measures, the functioning of channels invested with a public-service remit, the existence of stockholding caps in channels and networks, intellectual property rights in the cultural, journalistic and scientific sphere and specific social-security systems;

A real justice and fundamental rights policy

50. Calls on the Commission to play an active role in pushing for the adoption of the horizontal anti-discrimination directive in line with Parliament’s position, and in the fight against discrimination, including attacks on Roma, migrants and asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups;

51. Asks the Commission to evaluate the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS) and the Council recommendation on measures of effective integration of the Roma in the Member States, and to propose additional measures if necessary for the effective inclusion of the Roma;
52. Calls on the Commission to come up with an action plan for Member States to enhance detention conditions, especially given the widespread use of pre-trial detention, including in European Arrest Warrant (EAW) cases; calls on the Commission to take full account of European Court of Human Rights case-law on prison conditions;

53. Is deeply disappointed with the inaction of the Commission with regard to the legislative own-initiative report on the revision of the European Arrest Warrant; calls on the Commission to come up with a new proposal, taking into account Parliament’s report on this matter, especially the issue of proportionality tests;

54. Regrets the fact that the Commission has not included in its new initiatives a renewed up-to-date proposal for public access to documents, mirroring the first reading agreement reached by the Parliament in 2011;

55. Is deeply disappointed with the Commission’s recent European Agenda on Security, which is again very one-dimensionally focussed on repressive politics and extending EU law enforcement agencies;

56. Urges the Commission to respond to the requests from the European Parliament in its resolutions on alleged transportation and illegal detention of prisoners in European countries by the CIA, in particular after the report of the US Senate on torture committed by the CIA;

57. Welcomes the renewed commitment to access to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR); considers, however, the opinion of the Court of the Justice of the European Union (ECJ) on the European Union’s accession to the ECHR as a major setback for human rights;

58. Calls on the Commission to take full account of the ruling of the ECJ in Joined Cases C 293/12 and C 594/12 of 8 April 2014; urges the Commission in this context to refrain from proposing any further measures based on blanket data retention;

59. Considers that the ECJ ruling on data retention is relevant to the collection of passenger name record data for law enforcement purposes; calls on the Commission, therefore, to withdraw the proposal on EU PNR; insists that the Commission should provide the European Parliament with an impact assessment of the judgment on all legal proposals containing bulk collection and storage of personal data;

60. Calls on the Commission to initiate serious efforts to protect citizens from increasing state surveillance;

A human-rights-based policy on migration

61. Calls on the Commission to develop in 2015 ambitious proposals for safe and legal ways to access protection in the EU for all women, men and children in need of protection, so that people will no longer be forced to risk their lives in the Mediterranean or in the deserts on their way to Europe;

62. Welcomes the proposal of the European Commission to establish provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of Italy and Greece as a first step;
calls, however, on the European Commission to present by the end of 2015 a more ambitious proposal to reflect the increased arrivals in 2015 both in Greece and Italy; recalls that the country of allocation should be based on the family, language and cultural ties of the refugees; calls for the suspension of the Dublin regulation;

63. Condemns the strong focus of the Commission in its European Agenda on Migration on the prevention and repression of irregular migration, including through detention, without any regard to the growing number of asylum seekers fleeing from wars, persecution and climate disasters; strongly condemns therefore the multiplication of repressive proposals made by the European Commission in 2014, such as the EUNAVFOR MED operation aimed at targeting smugglers’ boats, the increase in the budget of FRONTEX, the acceleration of migrant returns and the encouragement to use coercion and detention in order to enforce the fingerprinting of migrants; calls on the European Commission to redirect this funding towards search and rescue activities, open reception centres, resettlement and relocation programmes, and integration;

A peaceful global actor

64. Calls on the Commission and the Council to enhance the EU’s relationship with strategic partners in relevant areas, including the Mediterranean, Russia, China and new emerging global and regional actors;

65. Rejects the CFSP and CSDP policies that are in full alignment with NATO and the transatlantic relationship, further militarising international relations, advocating interventions and actively supporting the military-industrial complex; calls for respect for international law and a return to political-diplomatic means of solving conflicts;

66. Takes the view that the priority must be to maintain peace and stability and fundamental and human rights through a peaceful and civil foreign policy in line with international law and applied in a non-discriminatory way, and by taking a leading role in the diplomatic and peaceful resolution of conflicts, including mediation initiatives and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes in line with the United Nations Charter; stresses the importance of efforts to improve and strengthen the international (Arms Trade Treaty - ATT) and EU arms export control regime, to support the NPT regime and nuclear disarmament, and of measures on poverty eradication, humanitarian aid, sustainable economic and social development and the Millennium Development Goals that favour balanced economic relations, fair trade and the fair distribution of resources and wealth in the EU’s neighbourhood and the world;

67. Stresses the importance and timeliness of the review of the ENP; emphasises that the revised ENP should be able to provide a quick and adequate response to the situation on the ground, while also putting forward a long-term vision for developing relations with the neighbouring countries and taking account of asymmetries between the parties; takes the view that a new framework needs to be created for relations with the ENP countries and regions, based on strict compliance with international law and the United Nations Charter and on non-intervention in their internal affairs and respect for their sovereignty, with the aim of supporting the development of neighbouring regions and promoting employment and education, instead of promoting association agreements geared solely to establishing free-trade areas that harm the people in the ENP states and only benefit corporate interests on the European side and elites in the ENP states;
68. Rejects the plans to speed up the provisions for the financing of civilian missions and the plans to simplify decision-making procedures and implementation, as the purely civilian nature of such missions is often questionable given that civilian and military aspects are increasingly blurred and merged, in particular in the area of the Security Sector Reform (SSR) and training missions;

69. Stresses the lack of parliamentary control, and reservations regarding CSDP missions, at both European and national level; stresses that the democratic deficit is increased by the ‘pooling and sharing’ concept and the so-called comprehensive approach, as well as the close cooperation between EU, NATO, the ATHENA mechanism, and the deployment of EU Battlegroups clearly increases this deficit;

70. Rejects the implementation of a pilot project on CSDP research undertaken jointly by the Commission and the EDA, covering inter alia remotely piloted aircraft systems (RPAS); is strongly opposed to any financing from the Horizon 2020 funds, or the EU budget in general, being used for military, civil-military or security research in general and for the development of RPAS in particular;

Reinforcing citizens’ rights

71. Calls on the Commission to present the promised proposal for an interinstitutional agreement on a mandatory transparency register for all EU institutions; reaffirms the need to enhance representative and participatory democracy by implementing Articles 9 to 12 of the Treaty of Lisbon;

72. Calls on the Commission to present a proposal for a revision of the European Citizens’ Initiative based on the conclusions in the European Parliament’s upcoming implementation report;

73. Calls on the Commission to explore a citizens’ social veto as a mechanism that can prevent the entry into force of EU legislation that would harm the poorest, increase inequality or decrease social rights;

Other policy priorities

Fisheries policy

74. Calls for a decentralised Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), which promotes the modernisation and sustainable development of the fisheries sector, ensuring its socio-economic viability, the sustainability of resources, the maintenance and creation of jobs and the improvement of living conditions of fisheries workers;

75. Calls for measures to improve the price of the first sale of fish and the income of fisheries workers, on subsidy or compensation mechanisms for fisheries workers affected by the economic and social repercussions of the recovery plans, multiannual management and measures for the protection of ecosystems;

76. Calls for measures to ensure national sovereignty over the Exclusive Economic Zones of Member States and their fisheries resources, allowing proximity management; takes the view that twelve miles should be maintained as a zone of exclusive access for the
national fleet of each Member State, and proposes that the possibility be considered of its extension to adjacent areas, conforming to the continental shelves;

77. Calls for biodiversity to be safeguarded in marine environments, ensuring favourable conditions for fish populations to replenish; advocates in this regard the implementation of adequate sustainable management practices, which could include the creation of fisheries-free zones, in areas where fish stocks and biodiversity are threatened, consistent with the most recent scientific knowledge;

78. Reaffirms the need for the CFP to recognise the specific characteristics of small-scale and coastal fishing and to analyse to what extent the existing instruments are suited to the sector’s needs, adapting them accordingly;

79. Calls on the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) to support small-scale fisheries, to fully address the specific problems of this sector and to favour proximity management, sustainable fisheries and the development of coastal communities;

80. Regrets that the approved CFP and the common market organisation (CMO) lag well behind the real needs of the fisheries sector, and calls for a review of these two regulations as soon as possible;

81. Criticises what overly zealous drastic cuts in total allowable catch (TAC) allowances can do to the sector, to livelihoods and to rural communities, and asks the Commission to do its utmost to prevent this from happening in the future;

**Agricultural policies**

82. Believes that agriculture is one of the sectors that can maintain a certain value creation despite the effects of the crisis: notes, however, that there is a shortage of farmers, in particular young farmers and female farmers; calls on the EU to undertake an in-depth analysis of the factors behind this with a view to implementing meaningful measures to counteract it; regrets that this phenomenon is putting at risk agricultural and rural patrimonies of worldwide importance, while at the same time large agro-business companies are expanding their margins and imposing their model of a global food system that entails destructive environmental effects; underlines that instead of big business, farmers must be at the centre of EU agricultural and food policies in order to truly boost growth and jobs in all the regions of the EU; regrets that the present policies are leading to the decimation of traditional family farms across the EU and subsequently to the decline of social and economic activity in rural areas;

83. Emphasises that the EU must work towards a fair distribution of the right to grow among producers and develop public instruments that adapt supply and demand in order to maintain farmer’s incomes and food production levels in order to protect farmers against price volatility; calls, therefore, for a mid-term review which is robust and effective in finding sustainable solutions to the issues inherent within the CAP;

84. Stresses that the EU must give priority to the protection of, and access to, its agricultural land and prevent land grabbing, a crucial matter of global importance in defending farmers, soils and the environment;
85. Stresses, with a view to protecting agricultural land in the long term, the need for effective climate change prevention and mitigation strategies to come into play across Europe in order to decarbonise the agricultural sector while aiming to protect the productivity of European farms;

86. Calls on the EU to forbid the authorisation, cultivation and marketing of GMOs and to make a strong commitment to the European organic farming sector, the only one that has been growing in recent decades;

87. Asks the Commission to withdraw its cloning proposals and to present new ones that reflect the position of the European Parliament, allowing also for the application of the ordinary legislative procedure; objects to the choice of the consent procedure for the directive on the placing on the market of food from animal clones, as this would deprive Parliament of its right to amend the proposal;

88. Calls for the European Union to forbid all forms of seed patenting in order to protect farmers against unfair competition and unnecessary bureaucracy, and to protect local varieties/biodiversity and our genetic and cultural heritage;

89. Regrets the current lack of compliance with animal welfare standards in European livestock farming and implores the Commission to ensure that existing legislation is adequately enforced in all Member States while bearing in mind the cost of compliance to farmers, particularly small farmers without economies of scale; further calls on the Commission to improve animal welfare rules in current EU legislation on organic farming and to remove any exceptions to animal welfare rules, such as the use of inappropriate breeds, tethering of livestock and unnecessary castration;

90. Welcomes the recent initiative by the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark to limit the maximum transport time for live animals to eight hours; calls on the Commission to revise as a matter of urgency Council Regulation (EC) No 1/2005 of 22 December 2004 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations, and thus to shorten the maximum transport times for live animals;

91. Calls on the Commission to publish its report ‘Building a Sustainable European Food System’, which has already been approved by three former Commissioners, and to come forward with an action plan that takes account of the conclusions of this report; advocates in this regard a shift away from intensive livestock farming towards a fair, sustainable and plant-based form of protein production in agriculture in the EU, and that the Commission supports and promotes local markets and the consumption of local, seasonal and organic products; further requests a review and stimulus of the ecological horticultural sector across the Member States in order to ensure minimal food miles for nutritious food;

92. Requests the opening of the debate to develop a new EU agricultural and food policy that responds to the interest of the whole of society; in this context asks that a public consultation is launched on food sovereignty and responsible consumption;

93. Strongly criticises the continued existence of agricultural export refunds of any kind; calls for their immediate abolition;
Development policy

94. Urges the Commission to develop a comprehensive strategy and an action plan with strong recommendations to tackle illicit capital flows and tax evasion and tax avoidance, and to improve tax cooperation and financial transparency to prevent cross-border tax avoidance and evasion by multinational companies and to boost domestic resource mobilisation as a predictable source of development finance for developing countries;

95. Calls on the Commission to support, by means of a Communication setting out the basis for concerted EU action, the ongoing process of developing, under the auspices of the UN, a legally binding instrument on transnational corporations, and to provide for the establishment of effective remedies for victims in cases where domestic jurisdiction is clearly unable to prosecute multinationals effectively;

96. Calls on the Commission, in partnership with UN Women, to put a strong emphasis on equality between men and women and the empowerment of women in all its proposals, in recognising that equality between men and women is an indispensable part of the process of poverty reduction and sustainable development;

97. Calls for policy areas that impact upon development, including trade, migration, energy, environment and climate change, agricultural and fisheries policy, to respond to the principle of Policy Coherence for Development and to be aligned with development objectives;

98. Stresses that ODA remains a key instrument for financing development; urges the EU and its Member States to re-commit without delay to the 0.7 % of GNI target for ODA by presenting multiannual budget timetables for the scale-up to these levels by 2020 and setting out a clear timetable to meet their commitments on development effectiveness, including commitments to untying aid, while boosting partner country ownership, alignment with partner countries’ development strategies, mutual accountability and donor harmonisation by reducing aid fragmentation through greater coordination between different aid mechanisms and donors;

99. Call for a human needs-based approach to debt sustainability through a binding set of standards to define responsible lending and borrowing, debt audits and a fair debt workout mechanism, which should assess the legitimacy and the sustainability of countries’ debt burdens and the possible cancellation of unsustainable and unjust debt; urges the EU to engage constructively in the UN negotiations leading to a multilateral legal framework for sovereign debt restructuring processes with a view to alleviating the debt burden; also urges the EU to push for the implementation of the UNCTAD principles of responsible sovereign debt transactions for both borrowers and lenders;

100. Reiterates that payments from the DCI and EDF cannot be used for military and security programmes, policy cooperation and army reform; stresses that all humanitarian action has to be purely civilian;

Women’s rights and gender equality

101. Calls on the Commission and the Council to put forward a proposal for a
comprehensive EU strategy on violence against women, including legislation on minimum standards against violence against women, takes the view there should be no separate action plan on, for example, female genital mutilation, domestic violence or sexual violence, but that all the different forms of violence against women should be framed within an overarching and effective strategy, based on a gender equality perspective, including pursuing EU accession to the Istanbul Convention signed in 2011 to prevent and fight violence against women and domestic violence; calls, in this context, on the Commission to make 2016 the European Year to End Violence against Women and to allocate substantial resources to raising awareness and supporting actions at all levels, with particular support for women’s rights NGOs; calls on the Commission to adopt and implement the EU strategy for equality between women and men 2015-2020;

102. Deplores the Commission’s intention to withdraw the Maternity Leave Directive in the ‘REFIT’ exercise; calls for a legislative initiative to revise Council Directive 92/85/EEC, offering the same level of protection as was approved in Parliament’s 2008 resolution, as an immediate action to improve the health and safety of pregnant workers or workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding; calls for progress in EU-level provisions on parental leave, including specific provisions for paternity leave;

103. Urges the Commission to audit its development aid programme to ensure that EU funding is not subject to restrictions imposed by other partner donors regarding necessary medical treatment, including access to safe abortion for women and girls who are victims of rape in armed conflicts, in accordance with the common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions guaranteeing all necessary medical care required by the wounded and sick; calls also on the Commission to guarantee and include universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights in all related policy areas in the EU and beyond;

104. Calls on the Commission to make gender equality and women’s rights a core concern in its development policies; is convinced that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential for the achievement of the international development goals; calls for a feminist, anti-militarist and peace-oriented EU development policy;

105. Calls on the Commission to revise its Work Programme in line with Parliament’s resolution, including the sector-specific positions set out in Part 2 of this resolution;

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