



TEXTS ADOPTED

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Preparation of the Commission Work Programme 2016

European Parliament resolution of 16 September 2015 on the Commission Work Programme 2016 (2015/2729(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Commission Work Programme 2015 – A New Start’ (COM(2014)0910) and Annexes 1 to 4 thereto,
- having regard to Rule 37(3) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Europe needs to respond with a clear vision, direction, leadership, ambition and courage to the challenges we face both internally and externally, to show that it is capable of meeting the expectations of our citizens, offering them prospects and creating trust, by making the EU a truly democratic union, a parliamentary democracy and an arena where citizens can steer and shape their continent in the interests of preserving and consolidating their standard of living;
- B. whereas the Europe 2020 strategy remains a valid basis for building smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in Europe and its targets are expected to be confirmed before the end of 2015, but its delivery instruments need updating and strengthening;
- C. whereas future Commission Work Programmes should tackle the defining challenges of the 21st century, such as climate change, energy independence, resource efficiency, the transition towards a digital society, global competition, gender equality and rising inequality, while taking into account the cost of non-Europe;
- D. whereas the loss of European competitiveness in the global economy, high unemployment, demographic change and an increasingly ageing population, present the EU with unprecedented challenges; whereas only competitive economies with the right macroeconomic policy will be able to create jobs, raise the living standards of their citizens and generate the prosperity that funds investment in the future and provides for public services; whereas a reinforced focus on promoting free and fair competition is necessary for the achievement of the ambitious objectives for quality jobs, growth, investment and the global competitiveness of the European economy, especially in the light of the fact that other regions of the world are growing more quickly, with increasing levels of productivity and innovation;

- E. whereas the EU has endured a lengthy economic crisis, with low growth, increased internal imbalances and a lack of job creation and investment, which will not be overcome without significant further European integration wherever justified, in particular in the internal market and in the context of economic and monetary union, with reinforced democratic control and accountability;
- F. whereas financial resources should be targeted at the EU's political priorities, in terms not only of amounts but also of flexibility and equilibrium, not least with regard to the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) and the multiannual financial framework (MFF) 2014-2020, which provides for a set of flexibility mechanisms, including a revision clause, to enable the EU budget to adapt to unforeseen circumstances;
- G. whereas EU policies and activities must comply with the subsidiarity and proportionality principles in order to help citizens anticipate and react to a rapidly changing society and economy;
- H. whereas Europe must be committed to an economic model which can ensure sustainable growth in order to provide this generation and the next with good jobs instead of debts;
- I. whereas sustainability and economic growth are compatible and can be mutually reinforcing, and whereas the Commission is urged to make sustainability a cornerstone of its jobs and growth agenda; whereas the Commission is the guardian of EU treaties in which sustainable development, social justice, solidarity and the fundamental rights of European are enshrined;
- J. whereas Europe needs the Commission to have a well-focused and sufficiently ambitious Work Programme with which to tackle the real needs confronting the EU and its citizens;

PART 1

1. Urges the Commission to use its right of initiative to its full extent in order to give the Union clear leadership, and in particular to deliver the completion of the single market together with the strategic roadmap for economic union, political union and external action;
2. Welcomes the focus of the Commission on 10 strategic priorities; emphasises the importance of promoting the Community interest and keeping the EU united and cohesive while respecting the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality; strongly believes, therefore, that efforts must be concentrated on these strategic priorities;
3. Welcomes the opening of negotiations for a new interinstitutional agreement on better law making; takes the view that this should lead to improvements in the quality of the Commission's legislative drafting, the strengthening of its impact assessment of draft laws, including economic, social, environmental and SME-related impact assessments and, where appropriate, the use of regulations rather than directives in accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality; expects the Commission to treat the two branches of the legislative authority equally in terms of the information and documentation provided throughout the legislative process; expects stronger commitment to ensuring proper interinstitutional consultation, a full follow-up to Parliament's proposals and recommendations, and the provision of detailed

justifications for each envisaged withdrawal; recalls that the multiannual programming, agreed between the three institutions, should provide the framework for the annual work programme and should form the basis of discussions on the specific annual work programme; recalls its view that better law making should not be seen as a tool for deprioritising areas falling within EU competences and that political decisions within the democratic decision-making process should prevail over technical assessments;

4. Urges the Commission to continue to improve the coherence of its legislative programme and to strengthen independent impact assessment of draft laws, including an SME test and a competitiveness test, these measures helping to remove red tape at all levels – European, national and regional – and for all economic actors and citizens in their day-to-day lives, thereby helping to foster job creation while respecting social and environmental standards; considers that SMEs and micro-enterprises should not suffer from unnecessary burdens when implementing legislation and complying with standards; calls on the Commission to aim at maximum simplification and, wherever possible, to promote the full use of digital solutions in order to ease the implementation of EU rules; considers that, where directives and regulations prove unsuitable for small companies, they may need to be reviewed to ensure that SMEs are not burdened; calls for micro-enterprises to be, as far as possible, exempt from all burdensome legislation, in particular to ensure that new start-ups and entrepreneurs are encouraged;
5. Expects the Commission, in the context of the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme, to present a list of legislation and proposals to be reviewed or repealed where their appropriateness or EU added value no longer seems to be a given and where they are obsolete or no longer fit the initial purpose; stresses, however, that REFIT must not be used as a pretext for lowering the level of ambition on issues of vital importance, for deregulating or for lowering social and environmental standards; believes that simplification is about quality and not about quantitative targets; notes the aim of reducing by 25 % the administrative and bureaucratic burden and the related costs of new proposals for the whole policy cycle, including transposition, implementation and enforcement; calls for significant reductions to be made with the aim of initiating better conditions to create new jobs, retain jobs in Europe and re-shore jobs, fostering competition and sustainable growth;
6. Expects the Commission to submit a proposal for the next phase of the Europe 2020 Strategy for Growth and Jobs which meets the big challenges and opportunities ahead of us, notably the energy transition, the digital revolution and preparing Europeans for these changes; considers that this strategy should combine the relevant reforms with big investment initiatives, building on the already launched energy union and digital single market and a new initiative for social investment and re-skilling; believes that the strategy should be supported by full use of the European Fund for Strategic Investments and a revised MFF 2014-20; considers that all Member States need to have the conditions to implement this strategy and that the Economic and Monetary Union should be completed to foster convergence in this direction; considers that the EU's external strategic partnerships should also open new opportunities for this strategy to succeed;
7. Urges the Commission to come up with a powerful response to address the EU's social problems, notably unemployment, the skills gap, social inequalities and exclusion, as well as the risks of social dumping and the brain drain; considers that this calls for an economic recovery and investment fostering quality job creation, social investment focusing on skills, childcare and other social services, and the social economy;

considers that it also requires stronger convergence to ensure that a set of fundamental social standards is respected across the Union; considers that, in this context, fair labour mobility should be promoted as a fundamental freedom in the single market; considers that concrete steps towards the promised ‘social triple A’ must start being delivered without delay; calls for the Commission to promote closer involvement of social partners at European and national level to this end;

8. Underlines the fact that the level of unemployment remains unduly high, particularly for young people and women and that the EU’s economic recovery is still fragile; welcomes the adoption of the EFSI, urges its full implementation and expects a range of investment projects to be approved and developed as soon as possible to contribute to a robust recovery and balanced and sustainable growth, which will foster employment and economic, social and territorial cohesion throughout the EU; recalls its requests as regards transparency, democratic accountability and compliance with the investment guidelines;
9. Calls on the Commission to emphasise growth and jobs as a cornerstone of the European social market economy and of the EU’s strategy for sustainable development; urges the Commission to make sustainability the core of any sound, future-oriented and crisis-solving economic policy and to give it substance in this and future work programmes via a dedicated heading focused on the comprehensive and rapid implementation of the 7th Environmental Action Programme;
10. Welcomes the adoption of the digital single market (DSM) strategy and calls for its swift implementation, with clear legislative recommendations and financial ways and means, aiming to create a digital economy where Europe can lead the world, businesses can operate across borders and the rights of consumers, right-holders and citizens are protected; is convinced that Europe provides clear added value by fostering entrepreneurship and the knowledge economy and removing unnecessary barriers; takes the view that it should also be aimed at fostering innovation and generating new opportunities for EU citizens, businesses and consumers and thereby creating jobs, while ensuring basic social standards; emphasises that progress in this area will have a direct impact on citizens; believes that consumer protection and fundamental rights protection are both vital in order for Europeans to put their trust in the digital single market as part of the digitisation of their daily lives;
11. Believes that the design of balanced and fair tax policy must be seen as an integral part of the Member States’ structural reforms where appropriate, and that tax and competition policy should be regarded as two sides of the same coin in the internal market, for the benefit of all EU consumers and citizens with a view to further contributing to job creation; supports shifting the tax burden away from labour to other forms of sustainable taxation;
12. Calls on the Commission to reassess and strengthen the mechanisms and resources of competition policy and state aid; considers EU state aid policy and control to be important tools for combating tax practices which distort the single market;
13. Reaffirms the importance it attaches to the ‘Community method’, the transparency of the legislative process, democratic legitimacy and the role and responsibility of national parliaments;

14. Insists on the need to fully, swiftly and effectively implement and apply existing legislation in areas such as the single market, environmental law, the revised common agricultural policy (CAP), common fisheries policy (CFP) and cohesion policy and the financial and banking sectors; calls on the Commission to better monitor the Member States' progress in implementation;
15. Calls for the adoption of Convergence Guidelines under the ordinary legislative procedure, which together with the Annual Growth Survey should form the basis for the country-specific recommendations; takes the view that Parliament's scrutiny role in the European Semester should be formalised and that all euro-area national parliaments should follow each step of the European Semester process;
16. Invites the Commission, along with all stakeholders, to explore all options for strengthening the EMU and making it more resilient and conducive to growth, employment and stability, with a social dimension aimed at preserving Europe's social market economy, respecting the right to collective bargaining, under which coordination of the social policies of the Member States would be ensured, including a minimum wage or income mechanism proper to, and decided by, each Member State, and supporting the fight against poverty and social exclusion, the reintegration of workers into the job market and voluntary mobility and flexibility between professions and Member States;
17. Emphasises that the EU budget must be used effectively to advance the EU's priorities and policies and calls, therefore, on the Commission to address concerns about mismanagement and fraud; calls on the Commission to take steps to evaluate and improve existing controls, and to lighten the bureaucratic burden where possible; stresses that the Commission must ensure the best use of EU taxpayers' money and underlines that performance outcomes are more important than simply spending the appropriations available; calls, therefore, for systematic, regular and independent evaluations to ensure that all spending is achieving the desired outcomes in a cost-effective manner; asks the Commission to renew its efforts to involve Member States in this task, particularly regarding funds which are disbursed by the Member States themselves;
18. Stresses the need for more efficient use of taxpayers' money and for further steps to protect the Union's financial interests in order to ensure the legitimacy of EU spending in a cost-effective manner; calls, therefore, for an effective use of the EU budget by concentrating on better performance of existing controls, evaluation of controls and ways to ensure that performance and added value are considered more important than maximising the use of appropriations budgeted; takes the view that the proposal for a Controller of Procedural Guarantees for the anti-fraud office, OLAF (COM(2014)0340 – 2014/0173(COD)), should be maintained;
19. Welcomes the Commission's European Agenda on Migration and the corresponding legislative proposals and related proposals for budgetary adjustments in 2015 and 2016 to ensure that the aims set out in the Agenda on Migration are implemented properly; reminds the Commission, however, of its commitment to tackling the growing pressure at the EU's external borders, including firm measures against irregular migration and people trafficking and smuggling, and improvement of a managed migration policy, which means better linking the EU's migration policy with its external policy; urges the Commission to further develop instruments for a human-rights based approach on people seeking protection from war and persecution in the EU;

20. Is deeply concerned at the recent developments in the Mediterranean and in the Western Balkan route, where a record number of irregular migrants have crossed the EU borders, posing an unprecedented challenge to Europe and its Member States, which requires a common and resolute European response; expresses its support for the measures put forward by the Commission, and calls for swift adoption and implementation by the Member States; welcomes the Commission's initiatives on relocation and resettlement, including the new one for emergency relocation of an increased number of asylum seekers in need of international protection for the benefit of Greece, Italy and Hungary, as well as the proposal by the Commission for a permanent relocation mechanism, to be activated in emergency situations, taking into account the number of refugees present in the Member State, which is based on Article 78(2) of the TFEU; urges the Commission to activate the necessary mechanism, which was designed specifically for situations of mass influx; underlines, at the same time, the need to speed up the processing of asylum requests and the return of those whose requests have been rejected; expresses its support for the 'hotspot' approach, announced in the Agenda on Migration, aimed at strengthening the operational support when applicants first arrive, including for registration and the initial processing of applications, also for those who are not in need of protection; rejects any measures that *de facto* reinstate border controls, jeopardising the Schengen area;
21. Recalls the Commission's commitment to use all available tools, including the EU budget, to drive jobs and growth through smart investment in closer partnership with the Member States, national parliaments, regions and cities in order to bring about better implementation of existing policies and improve the effectiveness of action on the ground, specifically in the use of the European Structural and Investment Funds; stresses that the cohesion policy, in accordance with the economic governance process, remains the main source of such public investment, and therefore takes the view that synergies between the EFSI and other funds, especially the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), should be used; calls for synergies to be explored between ESIF and Horizon 2020; urges the crucial involvement of private partners and private investors in order to make the EFSI a success and highlights its job creation potential; calls, at the same time, for EU-level democratic control of the EFSI; takes the view that any funding diverted from Horizon 2020 and the Connecting Europe Facility should result in an equal or greater amount of investment in research and innovation, digital infrastructure, transport and energy, respectively, and invites the Commission to seize the opportunity afforded by the mandatory 2016 review exercise to prepare compensation for these two programmes;
22. Calls for the swift implementation of the Connecting Europe Facility strategy, with better infrastructures and projects with European added value in the transport, energy and telecommunications sectors, which are essential for the functioning of the single market;
23. Notes that the Commission must launch a substantial and comprehensive fully-fledged 'post-electoral review' of the MFF 2014-2020 in 2016, accompanied by a legislative proposal to amend the MFF Regulation, as a way to use the EU budget and thus contribute to the recovery of the European economy; notes that a compulsory legislative revision of the MFF was one of Parliament's main demands in the MFF negotiations; attaches, therefore, the utmost importance to this process; expresses its readiness to work constructively towards finding solutions to a number of pending issues, including those relating to the financing of the EFSI guarantee fund;

24. Encourages the Commission to draw lessons from the expected conclusions of the High-Level Group on Own Resources by the end of 2016 and to make concrete proposals during its term; reiterates its commitment to a reform of the EU own resources system before the launching of the next MFF;
25. Reiterates its deep concern about the accumulated backlog in payments, which has undermined the credibility of the EU; welcomes the adoption of a joint statement by the Commission, the Council and Parliament on a payment plan for 2015-2016 aimed at reducing this backlog to a sustainable level by the end of 2016; reminds the Commission of its commitment to closely scrutinising the implementation of the 2014-2020 programmes, setting up an early warning system and proposing the amendment of budgets without delay, should the level of authorised payments in 2016 not be sufficient;
26. Calls on the Commission to propose measures to improve the exchange of information and increase operational cooperation between Member States and with EU agencies, especially regarding the alert criteria, and to make it compulsory to issue alerts regarding people convicted or suspected of terrorism; calls on the Commission to use technical and financial means in order to ensure EU-level coordination and exchanges of best practices in the fight against terrorist propaganda, radical networks and recruitment on the internet; asks in particular, in this connection, that Europol be given all the necessary means to tackle terrorism and organised crime, in accordance with its mandate;
27. Emphasises that reaching new trade deals is essential to develop an outward-looking, competitive European economic framework that is able to deliver tangible benefits and lower prices to consumers and generate new jobs by opening third-country markets and diversifying exports; recalls its view that balanced trade agreements can provide rules for globalisation; calls on the Commission, therefore, to ensure that European standards are not put at risk and stresses that trade must play its part in fighting poverty and enhancing development abroad; considers that the elimination of trade and investment barriers worldwide must therefore remain a key priority of the EU trade strategy; supports the Commission's efforts, therefore, in all ongoing bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations with a view to reaching a positive outcome in respect of comprehensive and mutually beneficial trade agreements in 2016; emphasises that sustained EU efforts are needed in order to take advantage of the process opened in 2013 through the Bali Package agreed as part of the multilateral negotiations of the Doha Round, which should pave the way for global economic stability; emphasises the need to incorporate a chapter on more cooperation in the fight against tax evasion, tax havens, corruption and money laundering in the EU's bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral trade;
28. Calls on the Commission to aim for a consistent and coherent foreign and security policy strategy that will strive to identify, in the rapidly changing security environment, the new and emerging challenges for the EU to face and address, the interests to defend and the values to promote, as well as to provide security for EU citizens and create an environment for sustained peace and stability; recalls, in this context, the importance of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the need for the EU to play a strong role in the world as regards development, peacemaking and peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and the worldwide promotion of human rights;

PART 2

A new boost for jobs, growth and investment

29. Calls on the Commission to submit a proposal for the next phase of the Europe 2020 Strategy which meets the challenges of global competition, energy transition, the digital revolution and demographic trends; considers that this proposal should combine structural change with large investment initiatives building on existing instruments (EU budget, EFSI);
30. Highlights the essential role of competition policy enforcement in creating a level playing field that fosters innovation, productivity, job creation and investment by all players across the single market and across all business models, including SMEs; asks the Commission to strictly enforce antitrust, state aid and merger control rules with a view to achieving a well-functioning internal market;
31. Supports the development of a capital markets union, while pointing to the need to ensure that systemic financial risks do not increase and to frame it with the necessary infrastructure and reinforced supervision in order to boost sustainable non-banking credit and promote long-term investment in support for the real economy;
32. Calls on the Commission to remove obstacles in the single market in order to improve the financing of companies, particularly SMEs and micro-enterprises, in order to boost private-sector investment; calls for the reinforcement and full implementation of the EU internal market rules, and urges the Commission to consistently develop the external dimension of the single market within EU trade policies, with a view to enhancing EU competitiveness and consumer protection while avoiding unfair competition from goods and products that do not comply with EU safety, environmental and social standards;
33. Calls for an ambitious EU industrial policy, enabling the development of new goods and the restructuring of industrial processes through innovation, with a view to modernising EU industry by managing the sector's digital transition and providing digital skills to take advantage of it;
34. Considers that the Europe 2020 Strategy covering competitiveness, growth and jobs should in its social dimension be aimed at sustaining and improving, through the coordination of the Member States' social policies, inter alia by means of benchmarks or, where necessary, through legislation, a set of fundamental social standards such as quality of public employment services, provision of unemployment benefits linked with activation measures, access to healthcare services, affordable and good-quality childcare services, vocational training and lifelong learning; is of the opinion that the Europe 2020 social targets and the Scoreboard of key employment and social indicators could be used to monitor the implementation of these fundamental standards;
35. Urges the Commission to finalise and submit the labour mobility package by the end of the year, also addressing the negative effects of labour mobility; calls for strong cross-border labour inspections to fight abuse; considers that mobility across Europe is a basic right; calls on the Commission, furthermore, to take action to promote the integration and employability of European workers; reminds the Commission of its commitment regarding the Posting of Workers Directive;

36. Demands concrete action to eliminate persisting discrimination in the labour market, especially with regard to elderly workers, the long-term unemployed, women, workers with disabilities and young people; recalls the need to address the problems of the long-term unemployed not only through education and training but also through the inclusiveness of labour markets, better counselling and support for job-seekers, targeted hiring subsidies and in-work benefits;
37. Hopes that the implementation of the Youth Guarantee, including support from the Youth Employment Initiative, will start to bear fruit and expresses its willingness to support any initiative, including any financial initiative, to strengthen this EU programme; calls on the Commission to ensure that education and training remain at the top of its priorities, including a rethinking of the skills needed for the current and future labour market, focusing on high quality, effectiveness, accessibility and equality; takes the view that particular attention should be paid to lifelong learning, dual systems, the recognition of diplomas and support for measures to reduce early school-leaving rates in order to ensure that students acquire basic literacy skills, as defined by the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), and in line with the Treaty competencies; calls for greater emphasis on the funding and facilitation of youth mobility, especially through apprenticeships, so as to match to the highest degree the skills available and the jobs on offer in the single market;
38. Believes that the accessibility, affordability and quality of education and child healthcare is crucial to ensuring that no child is left behind and calls on the Commission, therefore, to reflect on further actions to promote social investment, and in particular to reduce child poverty;
39. Recalls that a proper balance between flexibility and security for both employers and employees should be taken into account in any new legislative proposal, as should employment and social considerations, including the impact of ageing and skill needs; notes that the notion of 'worker' is multifaceted due to new forms of employment and self-employment and would require to be addressed with a view to combating inequalities, which can put at risk the fairness and effectiveness of our social market economy; reminds the Commission of its call for revision of Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to carcinogens and mutagens at work, which was due by the end of 2012;
40. Highlights the importance of the support which cohesion policy delivers to SMEs as the backbone of EU growth and employment, and calls for the establishment of synergies between cohesion policy funds, the programme for the competitiveness of enterprises and SMEs (COSME) and the Horizon 2020 programme;
41. Emphasises the continued implementation of Horizon 2020, in particular its efforts towards a greater focus on turning world-class research into products and services that can contribute to reviving the competitiveness of the European economies;
42. Calls for initiatives to develop the potential of the cultural and creative sector as a source of jobs and growth; stresses, in this connection, the importance of enforcing intellectual property rights (IPR), and urges the Commission to follow up on its action plan to combat IPR infringements, including a review of the IPR Enforcement Directive, which is out of step with the digital age and inadequate to combat online infringements, and also on the Green Paper on chargeback and related schemes as a potential EU-wide right to retrieve money unwittingly used to purchase counterfeit

goods; calls on the Commission to further strengthen the remit of the EU Observatory on Infringements of Intellectual Property Rights, and welcomes the Commission's creation of a group of experts on IPR enforcement;

43. Welcomes the Commission's aim to withdraw the proposal for a Common European Sales Law, and stresses that the new Commission proposal, as announced in the Digital Single Market Communication, has to be based on Parliament's position at first reading;
44. Underlines the importance of a competitive financial services sector which delivers beneficial products and transparent information to consumers; stresses that this will increase trust among consumers in financial services products;
45. Is alarmed at the possible fallout from an economic and financial crisis in China, triggered by a stock market bubble burst; warns on the possible consequences of systemic fault lines in the Chinese financial services architecture;

Fight against tax fraud and tax evasion

46. Welcomes the publication of a new tax policy package and asks the Commission to show ambition in seeking to ensure a fair taxation system, based on the principle that taxes are to be paid in the country where profits are generated, avoiding internal market distortion and unfair competition;
47. Welcomes the work done by the Commission and Member States to promote actively the fight against tax fraud, tax evasion, aggressive tax planning and use of tax havens, drawing on the expertise of the OECD in fostering good governance in the tax field in all relevant international forums;
48. Calls on the Commission to come up with a communication to develop an EU definition of tax havens (uncooperative jurisdictions) based on the OECD criteria; believes that this policy should be combined with a clear view of how the list would be used; calls also on the Commission to come up with an improved EU initiative on a mandatory Common Consolidated Corporate Tax base, even if the consolidation part is postponed at the first stage, which should have considerable administrative implications and will require a smooth transition regime;

A connected and inclusive digital single market

49. Strongly reminds the Commission that an ambitious digital single market (DSM) will not be possible without a proper mechanism to trigger investments on the ground, and supports the prioritisation of the DSM in view of the opportunities that digital activities can generate with regard to creating jobs and new start-ups, enhancing innovation, boosting productivity, increasing competitiveness, and thus delivering growth; emphasises the need to support the development of the digital sector, which should guarantee every European citizen a connection at the highest possible speed and lowest possible cost;
50. Recognises the Commission's commitment to unlocking the potential of the digital economy by focusing its approach on three pillars, aiming at better access for consumers and businesses and a better environment for the development of digital services; emphasises the need to work with global regulators regarding competition, safety and security; insists on the importance of improving access to the network for all through high-speed broadband connections, in order to tackle the digital divide;

welcomes the announcement of a European ‘free flow of data’ initiative, which needs to remove existing barriers to the single market for data;

51. Supports the Commission’s efforts to conclude the EU’s Data Protection Package;
52. Believes that removing red tape and unjustified or disproportionate regulatory or non-regulatory obstacles to the Digital Single Market Strategy is also needed in order to fully exploit the potential of a digital transformation of industry and cross-border e-commerce; believes that more targeted measures could be considered in order to build greater consumer confidence and increase data protection in purchasing digital goods and services across the EU, as both are vital in order for Europeans to put their trust in the Digital Single Market as part of the digitalisation of their daily lives;
53. Asks the Commission to take account of ongoing technology convergence in the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive by making appropriate recommendations to adjust and future-proof the regulatory framework; calls on the Commission to continue promoting cultural and creative industries and to support and promote the establishment of the European Year of Cultural Heritage; emphasises, in this connection, that the cultural and creative sector accounts for up to 4,5 % of EU GDP and up to 8,5 million jobs, not only being important for cultural diversity but also contributing significantly to social and economic development across the EU;
54. Counts on an ambitious review of the Universal Service Directive to bring end-user rights up to date;

Copyright

55. Calls for further efforts to develop and modernise the EU’s intellectual property laws, in particular in the area of copyright, in order to render them fit for the digital age and to facilitate cross-border access to creative content on fair and reasonable terms across the EU, thereby creating legal certainty while protecting authors’ and performers’ rights; ensuring adequate remuneration and tackling digital piracy relating to value and employment in the creative and cultural sectors; calls on the Commission to base any legislative initiative to modernise copyright on independent evidence; considers that copyright should maintain its primary function, which is to allow creators to gain rewards for their efforts through others making use of their work; highlights the fact that the important contribution of traditional methods of promoting regional and European culture should not be hampered by modernisation or reform proposals;

A resilient Energy Union with a forward-looking climate change policy

56. Underlines the fact that the Energy Union can be achieved through enhanced EU action in the following areas: a competitive internal energy market, a strong European governance system, research and innovation, new investments improving cross-border infrastructure, and interconnectors bringing sustainability and security to an energy transition that will boost growth and job creation and, in the long run, offer affordable energy prices for households and industry and thus prevent and address energy poverty;
57. Calls for the promotion of green investment, including through the strategic investment plan, and for a long-term and stable policy framework to promote a resource-efficient and low-carbon economy, strengthening the EU’s objectives of reducing CO₂ emissions, increasing the share of renewables and improving energy efficiency, which

entail investment in a pan-European electricity grid and a focus on building more fully on renewable energy sources;

58. Calls on the Commission to involve Parliament fully in common efforts to fight global warming, ensuring that climate action is taken into account in all EU policies by adapting them to the realities of climate change, and asks for legislative proposals to implement the 2030 climate and energy package under the ordinary legislative procedure;
59. Calls on the Commission to ensure the full implementation of the Renewable Energy Directive (2009/28/EC), along with proposals for effective regulation, including from Parliament, in order to allow ambitious renewable energy goals to be achieved;
60. Calls on the Commission to present a number of initiatives in order to establish an ambitious climate and energy framework for 2030 as the EU's contribution to the conclusion of a global climate agreement ahead of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change summit in Paris; highlights the importance of creating momentum towards a robust, universal, fair and legally binding agreement; calls on the Commission to ensure a proper follow-up to the Paris meeting and to put forward legislative proposals ensuring timely ratification of the agreement;
61. Asks for a legislative proposal on the distribution of 2030 greenhouse gas emissions targets in the non-ETS sector, and for a review of the legislative framework for energy efficiency, including the energy performance of buildings, the Energy Efficiency Directive and other governance-related aspects of the 2030 framework, and for a revision of the Renewable Energy Directive;
62. Urges the Commission also to give priority to the EU's geopolitical independence through unified EU negotiating positions vis-à-vis third countries, including through the timely revision of the Security of Gas Supply Regulation and of the decision setting up an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements in the field of energy; stresses the importance of affordability, sustainability and security of energy supply; emphasises that while the right of each Member State to decide its energy sources mix is guaranteed by the Treaty, regional cooperation (e.g. in the Baltic region, South-East European region, Central and Western European region, and North Sea region) would allow for cost savings and benefits for the European energy system;

Environmental and health issues

63. Welcomes the Commission's proposal on the Air Quality Package and the ongoing implementation of the REACH Regulation; calls for a more balanced approach to eco-design measures, based on their energy-saving potential and market relevance; strongly supports clear energy labelling with a view to giving consumers a choice, and presses for a new proposal concerning the Circular Economy Package; believes that investing in and incentivising the shift to a circular economy can support the Commission's jobs, growth and competitiveness agenda and, by reducing the EU's dependence on imported raw materials, has the potential to create a win-win situation for all stakeholders involved, with a view to advancing the transition to a circular economy through closed-loop manufacturing and sustainable product development;
64. Calls for comprehensive follow-up to the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the Commission report entitled 'The State of Nature in the European

Union', in order to address shortcomings, ensure the full implementation of the strategy and achieve the EU's biodiversity targets; emphasises in general that this process must not be taken as a pretext for lowering the level of ambition on issues of vital importance to the protection of the environment;

65. Expects the Commission to reflect on current challenges in the environment and health fields, where the state of the environment adversely affects human health, and to make progress on the planned strategies, in particular scientifically-based horizontal criteria for endocrine disruptors, referred to in the 7th Environment Action Programme; stresses the need for a step forward towards a common European Health Technology Assessment (HTA) at EU level that does not create an extra layer of administrative burden and the need to tackle antimicrobial resistance; expects to receive the secondary legislation provided for under the Tobacco Products Directive; stresses the need for an urgent review of the Tissues and Cells Directive, to bring it in line with the principle of unpaid donation, and the Advanced Therapies Regulation, which needs to be made more applicable to SMEs;
66. Stresses the importance of ensuring that any future initiatives or revisions proposed by the Commission in the area of health and food safety are based on robust scientific evidence;

An integrated and efficient transport sector

67. Calls on the Commission to ensure better monitoring and proper implementation of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy, from planning to implementation; stresses the need to take forward the TEN-T network corridors, in order to link the transport networks of all EU regions, improving infrastructure and removing barriers, especially east-west; stresses the importance of full implementation of the NAIADES II action programme;
68. Calls for concrete measures ensuring the accessibility of efficient public transport, developing smart and innovative solutions and mobilising financial resources for sustainable urban mobility and interconnected transport system infrastructures, including sustainable transport with technological innovation and alternative fuels;
69. Demands fair and efficient pricing for sustainable transport through the revision of the Eurovignette Directive and the framework to promote European electronic tolling, the drawing-up of a master plan for the deployment of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems, a review of the Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy Efficient Road Transport Vehicles and a review of market access rules for road transport with a view to improving its energy efficiency;
70. Calls on the Commission to explore ways to ensure fair competition between transport operators and to address the working conditions of road transport workers and enhance road safety;
71. Emphasises that, as regards the Aviation Package, a competitiveness strategy, a revision of Regulation (EC) No 868/2004, which concerns unfair pricing in aviation, and a revision of the European Aviation Safety Agency Regulation (Regulation (EC) No 216/2008) are key priorities;

Agriculture and fisheries policies

72. Notes the Commission's commitment to simplification and the proposed fitness check and evaluation of the CAP with a view to cutting red tape and removing regulatory burdens; asks for a proposal that facilitates the implementation of the reform in order to guarantee that the administrative burden for farmers and Member States' authorities is kept to an absolute minimum; underlines the need to ensure that the CAP's vital role in ensuring food security is preserved, to stimulate export growth in the EU's agri-food industry and to develop new markets, securing fair access for exporters, and stresses that the EU's very high food safety and health standards should not be compromised; calls for links between research, farmers and industry to be strengthened through innovation;
73. Calls on the Commission to help farmers anticipate market crises, with new and robust market tools aimed at avoiding loss of incomes, and by communicating changing market conditions, using accurate and real-time data where possible;
74. Stresses the need for strong measures to address imbalances in the food supply chain, particularly to ensure fairness and transparency in the relationship between primary producers, processors, suppliers and distributors, and calls on the Commission to investigate the imbalance in the supply chain and the sustainable role of the primary producer within the chain;
75. Urges the Commission to put forward multiannual management plans, which are one of the main tools for the implementation of the reformed CFP with a view to the sustainable exploitation of fisheries resources, as well as the legislative framework on technical measures, which is already expected in 2015, and a proposal for revision of the control regulation under the ordinary legislative procedure;
76. Asks the Commission, as part of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, to continue its efforts to create jobs by applying the concept of a circular economy and establishing synergies in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole (blue growth);
77. Stresses that the regulation on the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU fishing) has been a success and should continue to be implemented in 2016, in particular against non-cooperating countries and all organisations contributing to IUU fishing; calls on the Commission to ensure the coherence of all EU policies, including the CFP and trade policy;
78. Stresses that the objective of a single European ecolabel for fishery and aquaculture products must be pursued through a report;

A deeper and fairer Economic and Monetary Union

79. Urges the Commission to follow up on the 'five presidents' report' and to submit an ambitious blueprint putting forward all the measures required to make the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) more resilient and turn it into a framework for better coordination and structural convergence, using the Community method;
80. Calls on the Commission to take measures to improve the implementation of country-specific recommendations by Member States and to accelerate and enforce the implementation of structural reforms and investments aimed at modernising the EU economy, using the tools provided for in the Six Pack and Two Pack, and the economic

governance legislation; calls on the Commission to take into due consideration its duties and powers under the Two Pack legislation when dealing with countries under enhanced surveillance or under a macroeconomic adjustment programme;

International trade policies

81. Recalls its view that balanced trade agreements can provide rules for globalisation; calls on the Commission, therefore, to ensure that European standards are not put at risk and stresses that trade must play its part in fighting poverty and enhancing development abroad; considers that the elimination of trade and investment barriers worldwide remains a key priority of the EU trade strategy; notes, in this connection, that the Commission's 2014 Trade and Investment Barriers Report identifies significant and unjustified barriers in the EU's commercial relations with major third countries; reiterates, therefore, its call on the Commission to pursue this agenda and to combat unjustified protectionist measures;
82. Notes the importance of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement; reminds the Commission of the importance of cooperation, transparency and the exchange of information with Parliament throughout the whole process;

Other trade issues

83. Calls on the Commission to anticipate the revision of the regulation on transitional arrangements for bilateral investment treaties scheduled for 2020 in order to create the necessary instruments for additional steps to be taken in the elaboration of the EU's investment policy;
84. Asks the Commission to continue its work towards new and revised free trade agreements and welcomes the Commission's intention to propose draft directives to the Member States for the modernisation of the existing agreements with Mexico, Chile and Turkey;
85. Notes with concern the lack of progress towards an EU-India FTA and asks that the Commission make further efforts to overcome the current road blocks in the negotiations;
86. Stresses that multilateralism must remain an essential goal of EU trade policy, and calls on the Commission to work towards an agreement at the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference in Nairobi in December 2015;

An area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust

87. Asks the Commission to consider addressing gaps and loopholes in the application of Article 2 TEU and the values on which the EU is based, namely respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, inter alia through a binding mechanism relying on a set of objective indicators, thus allowing a gradual response to breaches of these values, including fundamental rights, at both EU and Member State level; recalls that respect for human rights will have to be implemented effectively through compliance with all Treaty provisions regarding democracy;
88. Calls for the completion of a comprehensive EU-US data protection umbrella agreement and the revision of the Safe Harbour principles to be compliant and to not allow any

legal loopholes, thanks to an ambitious EU Data Protection Package setting out a new legislative framework at EU level for the protection of personal data;

89. Calls on the Commission to review the Brussels IIa Regulation on conflict-of-law issues in family law between Member States; urges the Commission, therefore, to prevent international ‘child abductions’ via a mediation scheme and to promote specific training for mediators and judges dealing with transnational proceedings involving children, and encourages the Member States to centralise child abduction cases in specialised courts;
90. Welcomes the adoption of the European Agenda on Security for the 2015-2020 period and the priorities set in the fields of counter-terrorism, cross-border organised crime and cybercrime, and fully supports the Commission’s commitment in the Internal Security Strategy to help address threats to the internal security of the Member States in relation to foreign fighters and terrorism; emphasises that the EU must face up to a growing threat of home-grown terrorism posed by ‘foreign fighters’, namely individuals who travel to a state other than their state of residence or nationality for the purpose of the perpetration, planning or preparation of terrorist acts or of providing or receiving terrorist training, including in connection with armed conflicts; agrees that prevention of violent extremism should be a priority for the EU;
91. Calls on the Commission to prevent the movement of terrorist individuals by strengthening external border controls, checking travel documents more systematically and effectively, tackling illicit arms trafficking and fraudulent use of identity, and identifying risk areas; awaits the Commission’s new proposal on the Smart Borders Package;
92. Calls on the Commission to take action regarding better exchange of information between Member States’ law enforcement authorities and EU agencies; calls on the Commission to help improve, intensify and accelerate law enforcement information-sharing and for more effective operational cooperation among Member States through more expeditious and efficient sharing of relevant data and information, with full respect for fundamental rights and data protection principles;
93. Notes the Commission’s proposals in the European Agenda on Security on the fight against cybercrime, and notes that terrorist organisations increasingly use the internet and communications technology to plan attacks, spread propaganda and raise funds; calls on the Commission to encourage internet and social media companies to work with governments and law enforcement authorities in order to combat this problem, whilst ensuring that fundamental rights and the rule of law are fully respected;
94. Calls on the Commission to put forward a proposal for a reform of the European Arrest Warrant;
95. Reiterates that the Commission should ensure full implementation of EU legislation within the transposition deadlines, and calls on the Commission to take appropriate measures against those Member States which have failed to properly transpose Directive 2011/93/EU on child sexual abuse; calls on the Commission to continue and step up its efforts to improve procedures for identifying cyber predators and protecting children against them;

96. Encourages the Commission to take into account the Court of Justice opinion in progressing towards EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights and addressing the remaining legal challenges;
97. Urges the Commission to continue to ensure the proper implementation of EU legislation in the area of justice and to work more systematically on judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters;
98. Calls on the Commission to help the EU actively promote dialogue with a global partnership against terrorism, working closely with regional actors such as the African Union, the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League, and in particular with the countries which are neighbours of Syria and Iraq and countries which have been dramatically impacted by the conflict, such as Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, and including the UN, NATO and notably the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee;
99. Strongly supports action to end all forms of discrimination and expects the Commission to put forward initiatives to strengthen the fight against discrimination on grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability or age;
100. Underlines the fact that the rise of racism and xenophobia in Europe poses one of the main challenges for the EU as it constitutes a threat against democracy and the respect for human rights; calls therefore on the Commission to put forward initiatives to fight racism and xenophobia in the EU;
101. Takes note of the Commission's decision to withdraw its proposal for the revision of Directive 92/85/EEC on the safety and health at work of pregnant workers, and of the Commission's willingness to open up the way for a new initiative that can be agreed on and can lead to real improvements in the lives of working parents and carers, with the aim of better reconciling professional, family and private life, facilitating female participation in the labour market, providing minimum protection to mothers and reducing inequalities between men and women;
102. Expects the Commission to make 2017 the year for the elimination of violence against women and to step up its efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings and protect victims of such trafficking; calls on the Commission, in this connection, to initiate the procedure for the EU's accession to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention); calls also on the Commission to adopt a new separate strategy for women's rights and gender-equality in Europe for 2015-2020, aimed at creating equal opportunities, reducing the gender pay, poverty and pension gaps, and combating violence against women; insists on the need to further address gender balance in terms of commitment within the economic decision-making process and invites the Commission to address the factors that discourage women from engaging in entrepreneurship;

A holistic approach to migration and asylum

103. Reiterates its call for a comprehensive and global approach to asylum and migration policy; stresses the need to provide safety for asylum seekers in the process of requesting refugee status and to remove refugees' need to choose risky routes into the EU, tackling the root causes of irregular migration and efficiently combating migrant smugglers, strengthening solidarity and responsibility-sharing among all the Member

States; supports the need for migration to be linked to the EU's external policy through cooperation with countries of origin and transit countries; supports the Commission's proposal to offer humanitarian assistance; underlines the need for further action as regards the recent tragedies in the Mediterranean, in order to prevent the loss of lives at sea; calls for medium- and long-term challenges to be faced and for the development of a comprehensive response, as defined in the European Agenda on Migration; stresses that the Blue Card Directive should be revised to offer the prospect of legal migration to the EU;

104. Underlines its readiness to deal with the new emergency relocation scheme in a fast-track procedure and declares its intention to advance all other measures proposed by the Commission in parallel in order to ensure that Member States do not delay the permanent relocation scheme; reminds the Council that Parliament is strongly in favour of a binding relocation mechanism based on clear and well defined criteria and which takes into account the preferences of refugees;
105. Calls on the Commission to address deficiencies regarding the quality of detention conditions and asylum procedures within the EU, both of which have a significant impact on dealing with migratory pressures in an effective and efficient manner; supports the Commission's proposals to offer enhanced assistance to frontline receiving Member States from the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX) and the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) in order to achieve this;
106. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to increase the efficiency of the returns system for failed asylum seekers; encourages the Commission to come forward, however, with a proposal on a rapid returns policy following the evaluation and review of existing measures, for example to include within this framework the enhanced assistance of FRONTEX; insists that any return actions should be carried out with full respect for fundamental rights;

A stronger global actor

107. Highlights the importance of underpinning the common security and defence policy (CSDP) with a genuine internal market for defence and security, deepened cooperation among European defence industries, a competitive European defence technological and industrial base and a more collaborative approach to security and defence R&D and procurement; highlights the need for the Commission to come up with a proposal to establish a Europe-wide security-of-supply regime, which is essential for developing, sustaining and transferring critical defence capabilities as well as being an expression of solidarity and confidence between Member States; expresses full support for the launch of the preparatory action for CSDP-related defence research and the pilot project proposed by Parliament;
108. Believes that the defence and promotion of freedom, support for our allies, and the prevention of atrocities must remain at the heart of the foreign policy aims, including the defence of the rights of persecuted religious and other minority groups;
109. Recalls its view that, in order to deliver results, the Commission should put in place a revised neighbourhood policy, with a comprehensive and consistent approach between external action and internal policies; asks for a review of the European Neighbourhood Policy, in which the following points should be addressed: (a) differentiation and 'more

for more'; (b) engagement beyond the neighbourhood; (c) support for democracy, justice reform, the rule of law and institutional capacity-building; (d) a diversified offer: priority sectors; (e) the security dimension; (f) fostering regional integration;

110. Is of the view that there should be a clear distinction between neighbourhood and enlargement policies; is convinced that enlargement has been one of the EU's success stories and should be kept on the agenda, by prioritising and objectively monitoring reforms in candidate countries until the end of the term, with a view to maintaining their motivation and the EU's capacity to spread its values; recalls that only such a perspective can motivate the countries concerned;
111. Calls for stronger emphasis on the interreligious dialogue aimed at analysing and understanding religious developments in order to promote tolerance and active engagement within EU foreign policy against violent and extremist radicalisation;
112. Continues to support the work of international partners to secure long-term stability, peace, and political reform in Southern and Eastern Neighbourhood countries, and supports the aspirations of those countries seeking closer ties with the EU, including those applicant countries working to fulfil the criteria for EU membership, including economic, political and social reforms, and respect for human rights and the rule of law;
113. Considers that the recent financial market turmoil in China represents an important turning point for China's development model and that strong cooperation between the EU and China is needed to avoid possible negative implications for trade in both directions; calls on the Commission and the High Representative to consider the possibility of updating the EU-China strategic partnership, assess financial risks, and step up mutual cooperation with a view to ensuring better market access based on reciprocity, which will be beneficial for both the EU and China;
114. Urges the Commission to work with the Member States and third countries to take a series of measurable steps to eradicate practices that are harmful to women and girls, including child and forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), honour killings, forced sterilisation, rape in conflict, stoning and all other forms of brutality; urges the Commission to work with the European External Action Service (EEAS) to improve the support available for victims of such brutality;

Development policy

115. Highlights the fact that, in the European Year for Development, the Commission must deliver tangible results, and calls on the Commission to develop and deliver a follow-up action plan to the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid with a view to ensuring coherence and continued joint implementation of its commitment to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence;
116. Emphasises that development aid must be focused on efforts to promote good governance, to establish the rule of law, to fight corruption, illicit capital flows, money laundering, and tax avoidance and evasion, and to increase transparency and accountability of all stakeholders, including the national governments of developing countries and the private sector; asks the Commission, therefore, to develop a comprehensive strategy and action plan to tackle this issue in developing countries, in order to ensure that the EU's development and cooperation agenda is also adapted and conditionality upgraded to effectively fight tax evasion and tax avoidance;

117. Draws attention to the fact that SMEs are the driving force of job and wealth creation in developing countries, generating about 90 % of jobs; calls on the Commission to help support MSMEs and focus on working with the partner governments to implement reforms aimed at reducing regulatory burdens, fighting corruption and tax evasion, developing public financial management and effective public institutions, promoting entrepreneurial and innovative spirit in this context, and further strengthening access to micro-credit and micro-financing;
118. Calls on the Commission to focus on fragile states and elaborate strategies on peace-building and state-building; stresses that it is imperative to engage in structural and long-term partnerships that prioritise the establishment of the rule of law and democratic institutions in these countries;
119. Calls for increased investment in access to education in humanitarian emergencies, as a means of child protection in crisis situations, which also reflects the need to bridge the gaps between humanitarian and development assistance by linking relief, rehabilitation and development;

A Union of democratic change

Institutional issues

120. Urges the Commission to align the legislation of all pending pre-Lisbon files (under the regulatory procedure with scrutiny) to the Lisbon Treaty as regards delegated and implementing acts;
121. Reiterates its request to the Commission to submit, on the basis of Article 298 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, a proposal for a regulation on a European law of administrative procedure;
122. Urges the Commission to prioritise unblocking the revision of the regulation on access to documents, and to follow up the recommendations made by Parliament in successive resolutions on transparency and access to documents;
123. Strongly supports the initiative for a mandatory transparency register based on an interinstitutional agreement; reiterates Parliament's demand for a legislative proposal;
124. Calls on the Commission to step up its efforts to ensure EU accession to the European Convention on Human Rights, while taking into account the legal arguments recently raised by the European Court of Justice;
125. Calls on the Commission to evaluate the low percentage of successful European Citizens' Initiatives (ECIs), which has a negative impact on citizens' acceptance of this instrument of transnational direct participatory democracy, and to ensure that decisions on the admissibility of ECIs correspond to the EU's legal competence, and expects the Commission to give proper follow-up to each successful ECI when it has committed to doing so, and more generally to address the weaknesses and limitations of this instrument, in particular by facilitating the process and improving its somewhat bureaucratic and lengthy procedures as part of a prompt revision of the ECI Regulation, with the aim of transforming it into a credible agenda-setting tool;

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126. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission.