

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 24.5.2006
COM(2006) 239 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL AND THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Package of legislative proposals following the Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management

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The conclusion on 17 May 2006 by the Commission, the Council and the European Parliament of the agreement on the 2007-2013 financial framework (Interinstitutional Agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management) marks a real success for Europe, providing a stable financial framework for the political priorities of the enlarged Union for the next seven years. It is now up to the institutions and Member States to ensure that the financial resources available are used and implemented as well as possible. Action at European level must contribute true added value to that taken at national, regional or local level and must have an optimum impact on each European player. The Commission is ready to play a full role in all these areas.

The agreement marks a decisive step forward towards the ultimate objective of providing the Union with operational programmes by the beginning of 2007. Work must now be continued on each legislative act. To this end, the Commission intends to continue to provide momentum and act as a facilitator, as it has been doing since the start of the negotiations.

As part of the negotiations on the 2007-2013 financial framework, in October 2005 the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission adopted a joint declaration in which they undertook to continue work on the legislative proposals currently being discussed and then, once the interinstitutional agreement had been adopted and on the basis of amended proposals by the Commission, to reach agreement on each of these proposals. Thus, in accordance with Article 250(2) of the EC Treaty and in order to facilitate this phase for each legislative act, the Commission today adopted a total of 30 proposals, 26 of which are amended and 4 new.

Certain legislative acts do not form part of this package of measures, in particular those on which political agreement has been reached since 17 May. For these measures, the Commission has played a full part in helping to bring about agreement between the arms of the legislative authority. The same applies to the acts for which conclusion of the interinstitutional agreement does not modify the Commission's original proposal. For all the others, which are included in the package presented today, the changes proposed by the Commission take account of the content of the interinstitutional agreement adopted, either in a simplified form, where the financial resources allocated to each programme must be adapted, or in a more detailed form where the structure or even the content of the act must be revised. It should also be noted that four of the amended proposals contain amendments already voted on by the European Parliament at first reading and that one proposal has been divided into two amended proposals in response to a request by the Council and the European Parliament, although Parliament has not yet proceeded to a first reading of this proposal.

Based on these amended proposals, the Commission calls on the European Parliament and the Council to continue their discussions of these proposals and conclude them as soon as possible in order to ensure that all the legal instruments are available in time for the effective launch of the programmes in January 2007.