Resolution on the Communication from the Commission on the Commission Work Programme 2011

2010/2639(RSP) - 15/12/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following a debate which took place during the plenary session of 23 November 2010, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the Communication from the Commission on the Commission Work Programme 2011.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled by the EPP, S&D and ALDE groups. Parliament urges the Commission to commit itself to performing a realistic and operational programming exercise which must be effective and be translated into reality and better implemented than in the past. It asks for a clearer timetable relating to major proposals to be put forward.

Members note that the efforts made so far to solve the financial crisis and to sustain Europe's economic recovery have fallen way below what is necessary and that the work programme does not include additional measures to create more jobs. They call on the Commission to spell out its detailed response to how its initiatives and proposals will meet the challenge.

They welcome the priority given to the reform of European economic governance and warn that, unless the EU can develop credible economic governance, particularly in the eurozone, the future of the euro will be in jeopardy.

They recall that Parliament and the Council, as the two arms of the budgetary authority, should be equally involved in any mobilisation of the European Financial Stability Mechanism. They ask that proposals be presented rapidly to make the crisis resolution mechanism permanent (e.g. European Monetary Fund).

They insist that the Commission must rapidly bring forward proposals to revise the current financial framework and consider that the MFF for the period after 2013 must also reflect the increased scope of those responsibilities.

They strongly urge the Commission to come forward in June 2011, following the adoption of Parliament's position on the new MFF, with bold and innovative proposals for a substantive revision of the own-resources system.

Parliament believes that the EU must address structural reform without delay in order to improve its competitiveness and re-launch growth. It believes also that the modernisation of infrastructure (including broadband), increased effort regarding research, development and innovation, a policy ensuring sufficient, economical and clean energy, innovation and the development of new technologies and the quality of education and training are central planks of the strategy.

Smart growth: Parliament calls on the Commission to present a comprehensive action plan, with a timetable and targets, to deliver a single market for online content and services, in the interests of an open and prosperous digital society, and to overcome the digital divide.

Members welcome the Commission's ambition with regard to the Innovation Union. They urge it to promote knowledge and innovation in the context of the 8th Framework Programme and to reduce red tape in its R&D programmes.

They also stress the importance to be given to the new multiannual programmes after 2013 in the field of education, culture, audiovisual, youth and citizenship, expected to be presented in 2011.

Sustainable growth: Parliament underlines the strategic importance of the flagship initiative on resource efficiency. It urges the Commission to work swiftly on an ambitious proposal aimed at achieving binding targets and concrete benchmarks within the framework of the EU 2020 European Semester of policy coordination. It calls on the Commission to come forward with legislation to further reduce EU emissions.

Members consider that priority should be given to the proper and functional implementation of existing legislative instruments, such as the Third Energy Package. They call for the Communication on the new Industrial Policy for Europe to be followed by effective measures, in particular to achieve the desired shift towards a low-carbon and sustainable economy.

Parliament that the CAP reform process must result in a strong, fair, genuinely common and multifunctional policy. It recalls its wish that the amounts allocated to the CAP in the budget year 2013 should be at least maintained during the next financial programming period. It demands that agricultural imports from third countries should only be allowed into the EU if they have been produced in a manner consistent with European standards.

Inclusive growth: Parliament believes that inclusive growth can only be built on a foundation of equal treatment for all workers within the workplace and a level playing field for all businesses. It believes the Commission Work Programme should include proposals to guarantee these principles, and insists that the legislative proposal on implementation of the Posting of Workers must clarify the exercise of fundamental social rights.

The resolution calls for the presentation of a Commission proposal on the financial participation of employees in company earnings. It also calls on the Commission to heed the views of the social partners in the area of pensions.

Tapping the potential for growth of the Single Market: the resolution supports greater market integration, targeting the significant persistent gaps and enhancing the trust of Europe's citizens, workers, small businesses and consumers. It calls on the Commission to put forward, as soon as possible, clear priorities and legislative proposals.

Parliament asks for modernisation of the EU public procurement legislative framework. It calls on the Commission to ensure a consistent approach between the legal instrument on European contract law and the Consumer Rights Directive. It underlines the need for an efficient legal framework for product safety in the EU and calls for the final resolution of the problems surrounding the establishment of a European patent.

Pursuing the citizens' agenda: Parliament is deeply concerned that there are no concrete proposals on fundamental rights. It calls on the Commission to act swiftly to unblock the Non-Discrimination Directive.

Parliament calls for a proposal for a Communication on enhanced intra-EU solidarity in the field of asylum, but regrets the absence of legislative proposals on asylum, bearing in mind that the Union should have a common asylum policy in place by 2012. It calls for proposals on migration to be presented.

Parliament asks the Commission to ensure the compatibility of each legal initiative with fundamental rights, as well as guarantee that Member States respect the Charter when implementing EU law. Members stress that, in the fight against terrorism and organised crime, the rights and freedoms of EU citizens should be fully respected and that data protection and the right to legal redress are essential in creating a credible and effective security policy. They consider that the increasing number of crimes requires more Community plans on organised crime and cyber-security.

Parliament regrets the delay in the Commission's putting forward legislative proposals in the area of the ‘Lisbonisation’ of the current acquis in police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters. It considers that, following the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty, the revision of the legal framework is essential, and regrets that this revision is only proposed for 2012-2013.

Europe in the world: Parliament emphasises that the promotion of human rights across the world is a key objective of the European Union on the global stage and that improved trade relations and reinforced development assistance can help encourage progress in this field. It calls on the Commission to keep up the momentum for the enlargement process.

The resolution stresses new initiatives would be welcomes in the following areas:

- the EU's role in counter-terrorism, in order to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction;
- the development of the European defence industry and European defence policy ambitions in a long-term (2020) perspective;
- disarmament and global governance ;
- the strategy vis-à-vis the BRIC countries;
- the Mediterranean Union review, in the view of the current stalemate;
- a revitalisation of the Transatlantic Economic Council and also, possibly a joint strategic security review, following the new NATO strategic review.

The Commission is invited to:

- finalise the review of the ENP and strengthen the human rights and democracy conditionality in its relations with neighbours;
- afford greater priority to food security throughout Africa;
- provide a yearly report on EU progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015 and to introduce measures to ensure Member States fulfil their commitments to 0.7% GNI to ODA, and to monitor such undertakings; and
- actively promote tangible progress in the ongoing WTO negotiations in order to conclude the Doha Round as soon as possible.

Parliament recalls that multilateralism must remain the EU's first priority, and demands that ongoing and new trade negotiations should respect the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries.

The resolution stresses that that imports from third countries should be put on the EU market only if they comply with European consumer protection standards. Members consider that, in international negotiations, the Commission should insist that our trading partners comply with European environmental, social and labour standards.