Resolution on the Commission Work Programme 2016

2015/2729(RSP) - 16/09/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 408 votes to 182 with 23 abstentions, a resolution on the Commission Work Programme 2016.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ALDE and Greens/EFA groups.

Parliament urged 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.

Parliament welcomed the opening of negotiations for a new Interinstitutional agreement on **better law making**. It recalled, however, 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**. In this context, the Regulatory Fitness and Performance (REFIT) programme 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.

Parliament reaffirmed the importance it attaches to the '**Community method'**, the transparency of the legislative process, democratic legitimacy and the role and responsibility of national parliaments. It expected from the Commission stronger commitment towards ensuring proper Interinstitutional consultation, a full follow-up to Parliament's proposals and recommendations, and the provision of detailed justifications for each envisaged withdrawal.

In order to **give a new boost to jobs, growth and investment**, Parliament called 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; this proposal should combine structural change with large investment initiatives building on the already launched energy union and digital single market and a new initiative for social investment and re-skilling;
- 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; this called for (i) an economic recovery and investment fostering quality job creation, (ii) social investment focusing on skills, childcare and other social services, and the social economy; (iii) stronger convergence to ensure that a set of fundamental social standards was respected across the Union; (iv) fair labour mobility as a fundamental freedom in the single market;
- emphasise growth and jobs as a cornerstone of the **European social market economy** and of the EU's strategy for sustainable development;
- **strengthen the mechanisms and resources of competition policy** and state aid in order to ensure the proper functioning of the single market;
- ensure that **education and training** remained at the top of its priorities, including a rethinking of the skills needed for the current and future labour market, and support for measures to reduce early school-leaving rates;
- take further steps to **protect the Union's financial interests** in order to ensure the legitimacy of EU spending in a cost-effective manner;

Parliament also stressed the need to take action to:

- **fight against tax fraud and tax evasion**: the Commission was asked to: (i) 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; (ii) come up with a communication to develop an EU definition of tax havens (uncooperative jurisdictions);
- put in place a **connected, inclusive and ambitious digital single market** with a proper mechanism to trigger investments on the ground;
- 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;
- put in place an **Energy Union** through a competitive internal energy market, and the promotion of green investment, whilst involving Parliament fully in common efforts to fight global warming;
- design a more balanced approach to **eco-design measures**, based on their energy-saving potential and market relevance; the Commission should also reflect on current challenges in the **environment and health fields**, where the state of the environment adversely affects human health;
- **ensure an integrated and efficient transport sector**: (i) proper implementation of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy; (ii) concrete measures ensuring the accessibility of efficient public transport; (iii) fair and efficient pricing for sustainable transport; (iv) a master plan for the deployment of Cooperative Intelligent Transport Systems; (v) review of the Directive on the Promotion of Clean and Energy Efficient Road Transport Vehicles;
- **keep the vital role of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** by: (i) cutting red tape and removing the administrative burden for farmers and Member States' authorities; (ii) help farmers anticipate market crises, with new and robust market tools aimed at avoiding loss of incomes; (iii) strong measures to address imbalances in the food supply chain;
- 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;
- ensure that European standards are not put at risk through **international trade policy**, and that trade played its part in fighting poverty and enhancing development abroad;
- **develop an area of justice and fundamental rights based on mutual trust**: Parliament called 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 at EU level. It called on the Commission to prevent the movement of terrorist individuals by strengthening external border controls, and taking action regarding better exchange of information between Member States' law enforcement authorities and EU agencies
- **adopt a holistic approach to migration and asylum** tackling the root causes of irregular migration and efficiently combating migrant smugglers, strengthening solidarity and responsibility-sharing among all the Member States; Parliament supported the Commission's proposals to offer enhanced assistance to frontline receiving Member States and called for the tackling of deficiencies regarding the quality of detention conditions and asylum procedures within the EU;
- put in place **an ambitious and coherent security and defence policy** 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.