Resolution on the Commission's 5-year strategic programme

2000/2514(RSP) - 05/03/2003 - Follow-up document

The Annual Policy Strategy adopted by the Commission is the first step in the strategic planning and programming cycle introduced in 2001. It seeks to define the Commission's policy priorities and ensure that there is the right match between policy initiatives and the corresponding resources to deliver the priorities identified for 2004. The central political priority is the start of the enlarged Union's work. The two connected priorities are stability and sustainable growth. All three priorities provide continuity with the Commission's priorities for 2003. The annual policy strategy is part of the wider programming cycle, which sets out political priorities, gives orientations on resource allocations for 2004 and provides the framework for the preparation of the 2004 preliminary draft budget for 25 Member States and the Commission's work program. For the central "accession" priority, the additional financial resources are intended to finance the extension of existing programs to the enlarged Union. The funds are also intended to finance specific transitory measures under the Internal policies decided at the Copenhagen European Council: the Schengen evaluation mechanism, support for nuclear safety in the new member states, and continued support to reinforce their administrative and institutional capacity. It will also mean increasing funding for Turkey, Romania and Bulgaria over the period 2004-2006. The Annual Policy Strategy identifies the need for 1500 posts within the Commission to support enlargement. 780 posts are requested from the Budgetary Authority for 2004. 500 auxiliary posts were granted as a front-loading by the Budgetary Authority to support preparations in 2003. In addition, the Commission has re-allocated internally nearly 250 posts to support accession preparations. Services most in need of reinforcement in 2004 include regional policy, transport and energy, justice and home affairs and the linguistic services. The priority "stability" has an internal and an external aspect. The Commission proposes an additional allocation of EUR 175.0 million. Within the EU it will place an emphasis on improved border control and establish an integrated IT system on visa information and will develop a policy of security of communication networks. It also includes activities such as fight against bio-terrorism. Stability outside the Union will be supported with an increase in the support to the Western Balkans and Mediterranean region, while at the same time enhancing the European initiative for democracy and human rights and providing more assistance through humanitarian aid to the regions in the world where stability is endangered by humanitarian crises. As far as the priority "sustainable growth" is concerned, an additional EUR 45.7 million is intended to enhance the capacity to respond to oil pollution disasters in the Union. This increase also covers implementation of the EU action plan on communicable diseases and financing of contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis at the level discussed with Council and the European Parliament. Adequate funding for EU action on reproductive health and rights in developing countries is also secured. A number of other actions are reinforced notably in the areas ofenvironment, such as the protection of tropical forests in the developing countries, the new chemicals strategy, social affairs and energy. Actions that do not require additional funding include, amongst others, improved economic and budgetary co-ordination between Member States. The Commission will meet the human resources needs of its priorities on stability and sustainable growth through internal redeployment. Almost 140 posts are to be re-allocated within the Commission in this way. In total the 2004 budget in commitment appropriations could equal around EUR 111 000 million,. Of this, some EUR 11 000 million is dedicated to enlargement.