Enlargement: a European strategy to prepare the countries of Central and Eastern Europe CEECs for accession

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This communication deals with the future of the Community's relations with the countries of central and eastern Europe (currently associated countries) and their future accession. It is the second response by the Commission to the Corfu European Council on a strategy to prepare the countries of central and eastern Europe for accession and follows on from another communication on the same subject. The present communication sets out specific proposals for the implementation of this strategy. It puts forward proposals in the following areas: - creating the framework for a deepening EC-CEEC relationship: the Commission puts forward a series of proposals for strengthening relations with the institutions of the Union, in particular in the areas of justice and home affairs and intra-regional cooperation; - creating a legal and institutional environment conducive to economic development and integration: approximation of legislation, in particular with regard to competition and the control of state aids; - enhancing trade opportunities: establishment of measures to facilitate trade flows and reduce trade tensions; - macroeconomic and structural change and other forms of cooperation: promoting inward investment, integration of these countries into a single transport area, strengthening of cooperation in the energy, environmental and agriculture sectors, nuclear safety, regional development, social and cultural policy and science; - Community assistance for integration and reform (measures must be taken at Community level to strengthen the integration of these countries, in particular through the Phare programme or more appropriate financial instruments).