# Resolution on the on the enlargement of the European Union

2001/2590(RSP) - 05/09/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted the resolution on the enlargement of the European Union. This resolution reiterates Parliament's support for EU enlargement. It underlines the 'historic' nature of enlargement which 'represents an opportunity to ensure long term stability, security and prosperity in Europe'. The EU should be aiming to conclude accession treaties on a case-by-case basis by the end of 2002 to enable those applicant countries, which are ready, to be able to participate in the 2004 European elections. However, the House believes, the EU needs to improve its mechanisms for modifying the Treaties, as the current 'antique, untransparent and unintelligible process is bound to alienate' the general public as was demonstrated by the result of the Irish referendum on the draft Nice Treaty. There should consequently be changes in the way the treaties are modified. There is a need to intensify the public information campaign to promote the benefits of enlargement to people both in Member States and applicant countries. Candidate countries should have an advisory role until accession in all further preparations for the next IGC. The European Parliament considers that the likely cost for the EU budget raising from the accession of new Member States until 2006, can be catered for in the framework of the existing Interinstitutional Agreement on Budgetary discipline and improvement of the budgetary procedure. The House supports the principe of maintaining the ceilings of appropriations for payments at 1.27% of the Community's GNP. Other points taken up in the resolution include the call for Hungary and the Czech Republic to have the same number of seats as Belgium and Portugal in the European Parliament, i.e. 22. An amendment that was adopted calls for Malta to have six seats, in line with Luxembourg's allocation. The complementary nature of EU and NATO enlargement is also stressed., with Parliament emphasising that each state has the right to determine its on security policy. The resolution also refers to areas such as agricultural policy reform, the need to train people administering the law, and the benefits of candidate countires respecting the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Candidate countries should not have to meet any stricter conditions than the current Member States and an amendment stresses that they must enjoy the same rights. Among other amendments adopted was one that stresses that enlargement requires reforms that go further than the Nice 'left-overs', in particular they should ensure greater transparency and approachability for ordinary citizens and an active policy to combat unemployment. Other amendments express concern about economic and social hardship in candidate countries and stress the need to involve all stakeholders in work financed by the pre-accession funds. There is call too for additional support measures to be provided for border regions between current and future Member States. Effective measures also need to be introduced to tackle the risk of BSE in candidate countries. Lastly, candidate countries are called on to abolish legislation which discriminates against persons on the basis of their sexual orientation.