Basic information

1999/2029(COS) COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	Procedure completed
Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations **Subject** 8.20.02 Enlargement 2004: new Member States **Geographical area** Malta	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	STENZEL Ursula (PPE-DE)	07/11/2000

Former committee responsible	Former rapporteur	Appointed
AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	STENZEL Ursula (PPE-DE)	23/09/1999
AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	MALONE Bernie (PSE)	16/03/1999

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
BUDG Budgets	BÖGE Reimer (PPE-DE)	24/04/2001
CONT Budgetary Control	BÖSCH Herbert (PSE)	29/05/2001
LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs	OOSTLANDER Arie M. (PPE-DE) BERGER Maria (PSE)	29/05/2001 29/05/2001
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	GLANTE Norbert (PSE)	21/03/2001
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	SMET Miet (PPE-DE)	12/04/2000
AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	GÖRLACH Willi (PSE)	27/03/2001

	RETT Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism	WATTS Mark Francis (PSE)	06/02/2001
	CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	ANDREASEN Ole (ELDR)	11/04/2001
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs	RACK Reinhard (PPE-DE)	24/01/2001
	FEMM Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities	KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU Rodi (PPE-DE)	20/03/2001

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
General Affairs	2168	1999-03-21
Culture	2427	2002-05-23

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
17/02/1999	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1999)0069	Summary
21/03/1999	Debate in Council		
24/03/1999	Vote in committee		Summary
24/03/1999	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A4-0165/1999	
12/04/1999	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
14/04/1999	Debate in Parliament		
23/05/2000	Additional information		Summary
14/09/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
14/09/2000	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A5-0243/2000	
03/10/2000	Debate in Parliament		
09/07/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
09/07/2001	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A5-0262/2001	
04/09/2001	Debate in Parliament		
05/09/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		

21/03/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1999/2029(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 148
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/13761 AFET/4/10901 AFET/4/10861

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A4-0165/1999 OJ C 219 30.07.1999, p. 0007	24/03/1999	
Interim resolution adopted by Parliament		T4-0336/1999 OJ C 219 30.07.1999, p. 0370-0451	15/04/1999	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A5-0243/2000 OJ C 178 22.06.2001, p. 0007	14/09/2000	
Interim resolution adopted by Parliament		T5-0429/2000 OJ C 178 22.06.2001, p. 0074-0158	04/10/2000	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A5-0262/2001	09/07/2001	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0069	17/02/1999	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0500	13/10/1999	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	COM(1999)0508	13/10/1999	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(1999)0535 OJ C 056 29.02.2000, p. 0056 E	09/11/1999	
Document attached to the procedure	COM(2000)0700	08/11/2000	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	COM(2000)0708	08/11/2000	Summary

Document attached to the procedure	COM(2001)0658	13/11/2001	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2001)0700	13/11/2001	
Supplementary non-legislative basic document	SEC(2001)1751	13/11/2001	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2002)0700	09/10/2002	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2002)1407	09/10/2002	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES0936/2001 OJ C 260 17.09.2001, p. 0093	11/07/2001	
EU	Document attached to the procedure	32002D0090 OJ L 044 14.02.2002, p. 0064-0071	28/01/2002	

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 05/09/2001 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted the report by Mrs Ursuala STENZEL (EPP-ED, A) on Malta's application for membership of the European Union. (Please refer to the previous text). In addition, amendments adopted note the establishment of a Financial Intelligence Unit to combat money laundering and other measures to bring its criminal code into line with European legislation.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 13/11/2001 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

The Commission has prepared this third Regular Report on Malta's progress towards accession with a view to the Laeken European Council in December 2001. The structure followed by this Regular Report is the same as that used for the 2000 Regular Report. It takes into consideration progress since the 2000 Report. It looks at whether intended reforms referred to in the 2000 Regular Report have been carried out, and examines new initiatives. In addition, this Report provides an overall assessment of the global situation for each of the aspects under consideration, setting out for each of them the main steps which remain to be taken by Malta in preparing for accession. In accordance with this approach, the assessment of progress in meeting the political and acquis criteria focuses on what has been accomplished since the last Regular Report. The Report contains a separate section examining the extent to which Malta has addressed the Accession Partnership priorities. Firstly, with regard to the pre-accession budget, the Council approved a pre-accession regulation for Malta. It provided for a total of pre-accession aid of EUR 38 million for the period 2000-2004 to be used mainly for institutional capacity building as well as for the participation in Community programmes. The Regulation also provided for Malta's participation in MEDA regional programmes. In addition, Malta is eligible for the EIB pre-accession facility and for the EUR 6 425 billion EIB facility for Mediterranean countries. With regard to the Copenhagen criteria for membership: 1) Political Criteria : further efforts have been made to prepare the administration for operation within the EU, and the authorities' record on democratic and human rights remains generally good. There ahs been further progress as regards the functioning of the justice system with the reduction of the backlog of judiciary cases and preliminary steps have been taken to implement the Refugees Act. 2) Economic Criteria : Malta is a functioning market economy. It should be able to cope with the competitive pressure an market forces within the Union. Macroeconomic developments have been favourable in terms of the GDP growth, unemployment, inflation and a significant reduction of the government deficit. The government's medium-term fiscal programmes generated a further decrease of the public deficit. Progress has been made in developing restructuring and privatisation programmes and of public utilities and loss-making public enterprises remains slow. Further efforts to limit the influences of the state in the economy are needed. A faster implementation of structural reforms and further liberalisation is crucial to support the sustainability of external balances and external competitiveness in a more open environment. 3) Legislative alignment of the acquis : Malta has continued to progress well in aligning its legislation with the acquis and strengthening its administrative capacity. However, progress has been uneven across the different fields. - internal market : considerable further progress has been made in aligning with the acquis on free movement of goods, especially as regards the framework for the New and Global Approach. Malta must pursue its efforts in the fields of standardisation , certification and market surveillance an also align its public procurement legislation as regards the remedies system and bodiesgoverned by public laws. As regards the free movement of persons, efforts should be pursued to further align Maltese

legislation. Malta has continued to progress on free movement of services and capital, however further legislative alignment is needed in particular in the fields of banking and investment services, data protection as well as money laundering. In the area of company law, Malta is close to full alignment; - agriculture : progress has been limited in this area. Malta still has to adopt most of the extensive agriculture acquis and to prepare it agriculture for the Common Agriculture Policy; - environment : the adoption of the Environmental Act together with subsidiary legislation represents a significant progress but Malta is still far from full alignment and the capacity to enforce the legislation remains very weak. An overall strategy for the adoption and implementation of the environmental acquis must also be developed; - transport : Malta's legislation in the transport sector is in line with the EC acquis to a certain extent, but important parts of road transport law remains to be transposed, and sustained efforts are needed as regards maritime safety; - energy : Malta has made significant progress during the period covered by this Regular Report. An important development in the field of energy has been the entry into force, in January 2001, of the Malta Resources Authority Act which provides a basis for alignment with the acquis; - employment and social affairs : Malta is generally well advanced in terms of legal transposition of the acquis in this area, but especially as regards labour law and Health and Safety, but it is still far from alignment as regards equal treatment. With regard to employment policy, important steps have been taken by Malta to adapt its employment systems so as to implement the European Employment Strategy, including the agreement of the Joint Assessment Paper (JAP). Malta still has to comply with the acquis on anti-discrimination; - justice and home affairs : in the field of justice and home affairs, little further legislative progress has been achieved. Progress has been made in preparing the Maltese administration to the implementation of the Asylum legislation and the control of border in accordance with the Schengen requirements, in particular with the preparation of a Schengen Action Plan. Efforts are still needed wit respect to data protection, immigration and visa policy and judiciary co-operation. 4) Administrative Capacity : the capacity to enforce the acquis remains a source of particular concern in the area of the environment and it should be strengthened as a matter of priority. Malta should also significantly strengthen its administrative capacity in the agriculture field, in particular it has to upgrade inspection arrangements in the veterinary and phytosanitary fields. 5) Accession Partnership : most of the Accession Partnership short-term and medium-term priorities have been partially fulfilled. Progress has been particularly significant in the areas of free movement of goods and social policy and also in the areas of taxation and telecommunications, and in the area of free movement of services.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 13/10/1999

This second composite document, like the first in the series, provides a resumé of the regular reports prepared for all accession candidate countries. Although the main areas covered, the methodology and the analysis of the progress made by all the candidate countries remain the same, the Commission's formal conclusions on a country by country basis differ from those in the 1998 report. Firstly, the Commission recalls that the enlargement process is a complex one which is not simply confined to pure and simple integration of new countries in the Union. Besides the difficulties associated with integration both for the Union and the countries themselves, the Commission considers that the new configuration of 25-30 countries will require not only internal but also external changes. In particular, it considers that the development of Europe has inevitable consequences with respect to the Eastern countries that are not yet on the "candidate list" (ex-Yugoslavian countries, Albania, in the first instance), but also further East with Russia and the Ukraine, with which relations will have to be accorded a new dimension. The Commission considers that the new configuration envisaged also implies a modification in Europe's approach with respect to the South and in particular the countries of North Africa in respect of which new responsibilities are developing. On another level, the Commission considers that the enlargement negotiations should be started with all the candidate countries (thus abandoning the 'in' and 'non-in' idea) that satisfy the political Copenhagen criteria and can prove that they are ready to take the necessary measures to satisfy the economic criteria. In the current state of affairs, the Commission considers that the following countries should be in the first line to start negotiations : Bulgaria, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia. In this document, the Commission also outlines the method that it intends to apply to open negotiations with each of the countries concerned. In taking account of the progress made by each candidate country in its preparation for membership, the Commission will open one (or several) chapters for negotiation based on the principle of differentiation (certain chapters for certain countries in function of progress in given fields of the acquis). The chapters left in suspense in the framework of the negotiations under way, will be reviewed afterwards taking into account the progress of the country in these fields. The provisional closing of certain chapters will also depend on the extent to which the candidate country has undertaken its commitments in preparing for membership. Furthermore, the Commission considers that membership can only take place if the institutional reform has taken place by the end of 2002. The Commission also considers that the Union should undertake to be in a position to decide by that date on the eventual membership of candidates that fulfil the required criteria. Lastly, during 2000, the situation of all candidates from the point of view of the application of the competition regime and internal market rules should be reviewed, as well as that of the liberalisation of trade in agricultural products.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 08/11/2000 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

This Regular Report for 2000 on Malta largely follows the structure of the Commission's 1999 Opinion and of the subsequent Regular Reports; however, it differs from that used in the previous years on three minor points. Firstly, the part of the present report which assesses Malta's ability to assume the obligations of membership, has been structured to follow the list of 29 negotiating chapters. Secondly, this part has been broadened to cover also Malta's administrative capacity to apply the Acquis under each of the negotiating chapters (previously discussed in a separate section of the report). Thirdly, the report includes for the first time a section assessing the progress made by Malta in translating the acquis into its national language. This report takes into consideration progress since the 1999 Regular Report and looks at whether intended reforms referred to in the 1999 report have been carried out and it also examines new initiatives. With regard to the relations between the European Union and Malta, no particular developments can be reported as far as the implementation of the Association Agreement is concerned. The establishment of a customs union in two five-year-stages is a long-standing objective that up to now has not been achieved. The EC remains Malta's major trading partner (65.4% of Maltese imports come from the EC). Furthermore, Malta has started to implement a plan aiming at dismantling all levies on EC imported products by 2003, except for agricultural products. Following a request from Malta, the Commission is proposing a mandate to negotiate with Malta further trade liberalisation on fish products. The Council adopted a first Accession Partnership (AP) for Malta on 20 March 2000. Malta finalised its first National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA) and it was published on 18 September 2000. This document, which includes an evaluation of the costs of the different measures, sets out Malta's plan for the adoption and implementation of the acquis. As far as Community assistance is concerned, the Commission proposed in

October 1999 a pre-accession regulation for Malta. The Council approved the regulation on the implementation of operations in the framework of the pre-accession strategy for Malta on 13 March 2000. It provided a total pre-accession aid to Malta of EUR 38 million for the period 2000-2004, to be used mainly for institutional capacity building, as well as for participation in Community programmes. With regard to twinning, there are as yet no ongoing twinning operations with Malta as the regulation on pre-accession assistance was only adopted in March 2000. It should be noted that Malta continues to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria. Its institutions are democratic and function smoothly and there are no particular problems with regard to human rights. Basic civil and political rights continue to be respected. The overall situation with regard to economic, social and cultural rights is satisfactory. However, special attention should be devoted to the issue of the backlog of civil judiciary cases. Malta should also pursue and reinforce the implementation of its policies with respect to the treatment of refugees and gender equality, as well as thereform of its public administration. Moreover, the government deficit remains very high and needs to be further reduced in order to improve the macroeconomic environment. The influence of the state in the economy is still too high in some areas. The authorities need to complete the consolidation of public finances, including the reform of the social security system. In addition, in the areas of agriculture, the environment and regional policy, progress has been very limited as well as in the areas of administrative capacity, and martime transport safety. The areas in which Malta has made significant progress include telecommunications and, culture and audio-visual policy, justice and home affairs. Lastly, all adminstrative capacity should be strengthened in order to facilitate the implementation of the acquis.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 08/11/2000 - Document attached to the procedure

The Commission has presented for the first time a 'strategy document for enlargement' which seeks to be more analytical and forward-looking than its previous versions issued in 1998 and 1999. In the first part, the Commission recalls the challenges of the future enlargement, in particular in geopolitical and strategic terms, which go far beyond those faced in previous enlargements: Europe's improved security, stability and prosperity will be top priority in the complex negotiations which will result in the membership of between 10 and 13 new member states. The Commission also discusses the new potential candidates for membership from the Balkans area which will be declared in the relatively near future. A process in parallel to that started in 1989 for the current candidates from Central and Eastern Europe is under way in this region so as to prepare the countries of the former Yugoslavia and Albania for future membership: this involves a stabilisation and association process coupling financial and technical support, as well as strengthening the political dialogue between the parties. In recalling the various elements that comprise the pre-accession strategy (accession partnerships; national programmes for the adoption of the acquis communautaire; more than 3 billion euros per year of financial assistance with PHARE, ISPA and SAPARD; association agreements that set the institutional framework and the structural objectives of pre-accession; involvement of the candidate countries in the various Community programmes and agencies), the Commission presents a state of play sector-by-sector of the progress made by the candidates on the path to accession. The Copenhagen criteria (political, economic, adoption of the acquis) are reviewed in the second part of the document in order to determine for each country concerned the work that remains to be done before becoming a member of the Union. The Commission describes, in a third and important part of the section, the negotiation strategy that it intends to implement in the course of the next two years (2001-2002). In this regard, the Commission stresses the need to respect the timetable for the negotiations, considering that it is not in the interests of either the Union or the candidate countries to see the enlargement process get bogged down indefinitely. This is why a strategy in stages is proposed in order both to encourage the candidate countries to intensify their preparation efforts and to give them greater confidence in the process under way. This strategy involves the following stages: 1) the drawing up of a lists of candidate countries' requests for transitional measures and negotiation of these measures by making, on the EU side, a clear distinction between measures considered acceptable (basically transitional measures in the short term of a technical nature that do not pose a particular problem), negotiable (measures having an effect on competition or the internal market and a longer duration), and unacceptable (posing very fundamental problems in the context of membership); 2) the drawing up of a detailed 'road map'for each country laying down clearly the order in which pending questions should be dealt with in 2001-2002. The road map is, without doubt, the most innovative aspect of the planned negotiation method since it involves for all the parties an undertaking to finishnegotiations within a realistic timescale. The approach favoured by the Commission is one in two phases: 2001 will see the majority of the pending questions raised (mainly, the internal market, social questions, environment) with the exception of those which have the most important financial implications; these latter will be dealt with in the course of the first six months of 2002, with the 'institutional questions' chapter and the other unresolved matters (agriculture, in particular). A clear list of chapters for negotiation that must be tackled is presented in the Commission's document, breaking down the most important questions to be resolved into 3 semesters (up to June 2002); 3) the opening of negotiating chapters: it is up to the candidate countries to open negotiating chapters as a function of the timing proposed by the Commission in its road map. Certain countries that are already well advanced would be able, by virtue of the principle of differentiation, to pursue their negotiations at a more sustained rhythm and hope to be part of the first cluster of new member states. However, where the number of remaining problems is very limited, these can be put aside provisionally to be revisted in order to find a solution to the few remaining issues at the appropriate moment. In conclusion, and in virtue of the method proposed in this working document, the Commission considers that Union should be in a position to welcome new Member States from the end of 2002.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 09/10/2002

The European Commission has published its last Strategy Paper which highlights the processes to be accomplished before the integration of 10 new Member States. The Commission considers that Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia fulfil the political criteria and will have fulfilled the economic and acquis criteria within the timeframe foreseen for accession by the European Council. These countries will be ready for membership from the beginning of 2004. The Commission recommends concluding the accession negotiations with these countries by the end of this year with the aim of signing the Accession Treaty in Spring 2003. As for Bulgaria and Romania, the Commission will strongly support these two countries in achieving their objective to join in 2007. In addition to assessing progress made by each candidate, the Regular Reports and the Strategy Paper also evaluate to what extent the candidates will fulfil the Copenhagen criteria by accession, taking into account the envisaged timeframe for enlargement defined by the European Council. - Concerning the accession negotiations : the Commission therefore recommends to conclude the accession negotiations with these countries by the end of this year. The Regular Reports point to a number of areas where further improvements need to be made in the context of the political and economic criteria and in relationship to the adoption,

implementation and enforcement of the acquis. These should be vigorously pursued. For all ten acceding countries, negotiations on both the chapters "agriculture" and "financial and budgetary matters" are not yet provisionally closed, although most issues in these chapters which are not linked to the financial framework to be proposed by the Union have been dealt with. Moreover, even if the chapters "regional policy" and "institutions" have been provisionally closed, specific questions linked respectively to the budgetary allocations and to institutional matters have been reserved for the last stretch of negotiations. In principle and in line with a practice followed in previous enlargements, it will not be possible to go beyond a certain point in time when considering new acquis in the negotiations. The Commission therefore has proposed to limit the scope of the negotiations as such to all acquis adopted and published up until 1 November 2002. - Overcoming difficulties : the 2002 Regular Reports show that, overall, candidate countries have generally reached a high degree of alignment in many areas, as a result of the considerable progress in transposing the acquis over the last years. Moreover, commitments made in the negotiations are generally being fulfilled. However, some difficulties are still apparent in areas such as customs, agriculture (very few candidate countries are at an advanced stage regarding the setting up of the integrated administration and control scheme (IACS)), regional policy (reinforce their administrative capacities) and financial management and control. The Commission's assessment of candidate countries in this year's Regular Reports carries three important messages: the Union's pre-accession strategy has proved a success. The transformation process in the candidate countries has been considerably accelerated by the prospect of enlargement; the accession negotiations, which have been based on theprinciples of own merits, differentiation and catching up, can be concluded with most candidates by the end of 2002. Preparations for enlargement will continue; and enlargement is an inclusive process which is not yet completed with the first accessions. The European Union continues to give its full support to current candidates that will not be in a position to participate in the next wave of enlargement. - With regard to the process of reinforcing administrative and judicial capacity : the Commission attaches the greatest importance to ensuring that the candidates further reinforce their administrative and judicial capacity. It is an essential requirement for creating mutual trust among Member States, indispensable for membership. The Commission has prepared in the first quarter of 2002 jointly with each negotiating country an Action Plan to reinforce their administrative and judicial capacity. Based on the 2002 Accession Partnership priorities, the Action Plans identify the concrete measures that remain to be taken for each country to achieve an adequate level of administrative capacity by the time of accession. The Action Plans identify targeted assistance required to support the countries in their efforts. For that purpose, the Commission has mobilised additional financial assistance of up to EUR 250 million in 2002 to accompany these efforts, bringing the Community's total support to strengthen the administrative and judicial capacity of the negotiating countries in 2002 to around EUR 1 billion. - Regarding transitional arrangements : the process of building up administrative and judicial capacity will need to continue after enlargement. A number of transitional arrangements agreed in the negotiations also demonstrate that in certain areas candidate countries need to continue efforts until they are in a position to apply fully the Community acquis. While accession negotiations are based on the principle that candidate countries effectively apply the acquis upon accession, a number of well-justified transitional measures have been agreed in the negotiations, in line with the principles laid down for transitional measures. These principles state that any transitional measure has to be limited in time and scope and be accompanied by a plan clearly defining stages for the application of the acquis. In addition, transitional measures must not involve amendments to the rules and policies of the Union, disrupt their proper functioning, or lead to significant distortions of competition. Transitional measures have been agreed, upon request of both the candidate countries (some 190 requests accepted so far) and the Union (some 28 requests accepted so far). - As regards the safeguard clauses : the general economic safeguard clause applies to situations where "difficulties arise which are serious and liable to persist in any sector of the economy or which could bring about serious deterioration in the economic situation of a given area". The safeguard clause would allow the Commission to determine the necessary protective measures. Both, new and current Member States would be able to make use of this safeguard clause. In order to ensure a smooth phasing in of an unprecedented number of new Member States in EU policies, the Commission considers, that for a limited time, the Accession Treaty should envisage the introduction of a specific safeguard clause for the internal market (including food safety)and also in the area of justice and home affairs, allowing to react more flexibly to possible problems associated with the initial period of membership. Moreover, the particular situation in the area of Justice and Home Affairs deserves a special mention. There is now a considerable acquis in this area. It covers difficult and politically sensitive subjects, in particular where the freedom of movement of people and the consequences of the suppression of internal frontiers are concerned. The implementation of these Schengen-based objectives is subject to a two-stage process, which eliminates the need for any separate safeguard mechanism. There are, however, other non-Schengen components in the area of freedom, security and justice (for instance regarding the implementation of judicial cooperation, in particular mutual recognition) which are still causing problems. - Concerning the abolition of border controls and free movement : the EU has made clear that full application of the Schengen acquis necessitates a process in two stages. In the first stage (2004) the countries will need to have achieved a high level of border control, even though certain special arrangements such as shared infrastructure and equipment or joint patrols could be envisaged with other Member States. The lifting of internal border controls will only occur some time after accession and will be subject to a separate decision making process for each new Member State separately. - With regard to the EMU and the Euro : the new Member States cannot immediately adopt the Euro upon accession. However, as for all Member States, economic policies become a matter of common concern and hence are subject to policy co-ordination and multilateral surveillance procedures. Until that time, the Treaty obliges Member States to pursue the high degree of sustainable convergence required for the adoption of the euro, but does not specify the timetable to attain this. - Concerning the timetable : six months before the envisaged date of accession the Commission will produce a comprehensive monitoring report for the Council and the European Parliament which will look at the advancement of the implementation of necessary reforms and all commitments in the field of the Community acquis by each of the acceding countries. The Commission should adopt its Opinion on the applications for accession of the concerned countries. The European Parliament should then be asked to give its assent, followed by a decision of the Council on the admission of new Member States. Provided that the Commission can issue its Opinion in February 2003, and allowing sufficient time for the decision making process in Parliament and Council, the Accession Treaty can be expected to be signed in spring 2003. Thereafter, the Treaty, drawn up in all present and future Community languages, will be signed by the parties. - With regard to the financial framework : the Commission has proposed a common financial framework for the accession negotiations. This framework was based on the overall Berlin financial framework and on the assumption that ten new Member States would join the European Union (refer to INI /2002/2045). The Commission's proposals remain valid. In particular, the Commission considers that in the field of agriculture, the objective of gradually introducing direct payments for farmers in the new Member States from the year 2004 should be maintained.Structural actions should be based on a share of one third for the cohesion fund and be based on the overall volume proposed in January 2002. Also a temporary budgetary compensation, through a lump sum payment, should be envisaged for each new Member State which would find itself in a net budgetary position which is worse in comparison with its situation in the year before accession as beneficiary of pre-accession funds. Lastly, the Commission reiterates the need to earmark additional funds for the northern part of Cyprus in order to back a political settlement.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 04/10/2000 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

The European Parliament adopted the text drafted by Mrs Ursula STENZEL (EPP/ED, A) on Malta's application for membership of the European Union. Malta meets the Copenhagen political criteria and, as a functioning market economy, therefore it should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. The Parliament considers that Malta needs to intensify its efforts to transpose, apply and enforce the Community acquis in the environmental field and considers it particularly essential to draw up a directive-specific financing plan for solving the problems which exist with regard to land use, effluent, air pollution, waste management and nature conservation. Furthermore, the Parliament welcomes, in view of the predominance of SMEs in the Maltese economy and the problems in this field, and in light of the inadequate openness of the economy to date and the lack of competition in some sections of industry, that the setting-up of an Institute for the Promotion of Small Enterprises (IPSE) as a step in the right direction in the process of restructuring Maltese economy.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 13/10/1999 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : To present the 1999 Regular Report on Malta's progress towards accession. CONTENT : In accordance with the conclusions of AGENDA 2000 and the Vienna European Council, the Commission presents this report on Malta's progress towards accession. This report focuses on whether Malta meets the criteria set by the Copenhagen Council (political and economic criteria and ability to assume the obligations of membership) and assesses the reforms that have taken place since the publication of the regular report in February 1999 and the introduction of the pre-accession strategy. The report suggests that membership negotiations can be started with Malta from the year 2000, because the country satisfies the Copenhagen political criteria and has proven that it is ready to take the necessary measures to satisfy economic criteria. On a more practical level : - on the bilateral front, there has not been a radical change in developments in EU-Maltese relations, although the introduction of a customs union in two stages of five years has not yet come into effect ; - with respect to the implementation of aid, the Commission's services are currently preparing a regulation identifying the activities to be financed in the framework of the pre-accession strategy for the next five years (see procedure CNS/1999 /0199). The activities will centre on the process of harmonisation (as a function of the priority fields agreed in the future accession partnership for Malta). For the 2000-2004 period, pre-accession aid will amount to EUR 95 million to be shared with Cyprus and will fund technical assistance and training actions that are, for the most part, similar to Phare funding granted to Central and Eastern European countries ; - with regard to the Copenhagen political criteria, Malta fulfils them ; - in respect of the economic criteria, Malta is a functioning market economy and should be able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the European Union, as long as it takes appropriate measures, particularly in the area of industrial restructuring. The main challenge of economic policy is to reduce the government deficit to a level which is sustainable in the long term and which would allow Malta to maintain a balanced budget in the medium term after EU accession. It should continue to open up its economy by further trade and capital account liberalisation ; - there has not been any substantial change to report since the February 1999 report in respect of Malta's ability to assume the obligations of the acquis, especially with regard to the Internal Market area. Alignment in this area should be given priority, especially with regard to standardisation, intellectual property and data protection. The reintroduction in 1999 of VAT is a positive measure, although further efforts to harmonise will also be necessary. The levy of taxes on imports from the Union is an anomaly that should be eliminated immediately. In the area of competition policy, Maltese legislation is broadly aligned with Community law, although certain companies still benefit from special or exclusiverights. There is little systematic control of state aids and no legal framework (especially in the ship-building sector). The state continues to play an important role in the agricultural sector and little progress has been observed in this sector. Greater harmonisation in the transport and environment fields is necessary in which a global strategy will be necessary. In the area of justice and home affairs, Malta should adopt a law on asylum and lift its geographic reservation. Its capacities in the area of immigration control, data protection and combating organised crime need to be strengthened. Malta still needs to establish institutions to deal with the areas of environment, customs, consumer policy, fisheries, maritime transport and regional policy. Administrative capacity to apply the acquis needs to be strengthened across the board. A first accession partnership should shortly be adopted setting Malta's short-term and medium-term priorities and objectives in each of the above-mentioned areas.

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1999/2029(COS) - 13/11/2001 - Document attached to the procedure

In line with the previous strategy papers from the Commission which aim to set out the steps to be followed for the next enlargement, the Commission has puslished a new general document which sets out the progress made by all of the candidate countries with regard to accession to the European Union. If, on the one hand, certain countries have made substantial progress, considerable efforts still have to be made in order to ensure the effective application of EU legislation and standards ("acquis communautaire") before their accession. This is why the Commission announces that it shall present an important action plan in order to help the candidate countries strengthen their institution building capacities. The negotiations are conducted on the basis of the existing acquis, applying the principles of own merits and catching-up. It shall continue to follow the road map (please refer to the previous Commission working document for the year 2000) and the calendar approved by the European Council, which foresees the conclusion of the negotiations with the better prepared candidate countries before the end of 2002. In this context, the Union does not create new conditions for accession, which signifies that for all the subjects to come (in particular those which bare important financial implications such as agriculture, regional policy and the budget, shall be dealt with throughout the first semester of 2002), the Commission shall present negotiation proposals based on the acquis and the existing budgetary framework. The Commission considers that this framework provides a sufficient basis for the accession of up to 10 new Member States in 2004. The accession negotiations can be concluded independently of decisions for financing the EU after 2006. Given the present pace of negotiations and the progress made so far, the Commission should be able to make recommendations on those candidate countries ready for accession on the basis of its 2002 Regular Reports. It should also be noted that the countries which should be ready for accession on this date may be able to participate as Members of the Union in the 2004 European Parliament elections. In addition, it should be noted that the Commission's important action plan aiming to reinforce institution building should mobilise EUR 1 billion for the year 2002 alone (drawn mostly from the PHARE programme). In conclusion, the Commission announced that from November 2002, the Regular Reports that it presents shall identify which candidate countries are ready to become full Members of the European Union. The countries which do not conclude the negotiations in 2002 shall become subject to a new updated road map and eventually, a revised pre-accession strategy.

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1999/2029(COS) - 15/04/1999 - Interim resolution adopted by Parliament

The Parliament adopted its resolution, drafted by Ms. Bernie MALONE (PES, Irl.) concerning Malta's progress towards EU accession. The resolution notes that Malta is an integral part of the community of European nations and cultures and that its entry to the Union will strengthen this both in political and security terms. Progress is required in the field of justice and home affairs, but, otherwise, Malta meets all the political requirements of membership and has a robust market economy. Malta has also expressed a wish to work towards the main objectives of the CFSP. Lastly, the Parliament called for pre-accession aid to be made available to Malta on the same basis as other candidate countries and that it should participate in the European Conference.

Malta: accession to the European Union and progress in negotiations

1999/2029(COS) - 17/02/1999 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE: to present the regular report for 1998 on progress with respect to Malta's accession application. CONTENT: in line with the request of the Maltese authorities, who decided in September 1998 to relaunch their EU accession application, the Commission presents a report which updates the opinion which it gave in June 1993 on Malta's application. The criteria for assessing the prospects for accession by this country are the same as all of the other countries, namely : - relations between this country and the EU (particularly within the framework of the Association Agreement linking the EU to Malta since 1971); - political criteria (general political development since 1993, respect for democracy, protection of minorities); - economic criteria (functioning market economy, capacity to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the EU); - Malta's capacity to adopt the obligations of membership (particularly the Community acquis). In its conclusions, the Commission's report considers the results to be satisfactory in economic and political terms with respect to Malta : the Maltese institutions are functioning normally and Malta displays all the characteristics of a market economy. Nevertheless, the Maltese authorities still face a certain number of structural problems which require sustained attention. In order to strengthen Malta's capacity to cope with competitive pressures within the EU, a customs union should be set up in the first instance, accompanied by a comprehensive reform programme. As regards the adoption of the acquis, limited and uneven efforts have been made since 1993 to align Maltese legislation with the acquis, particularly in the field of the internal market. In conclusion, Malta's preparations with a view to accession differ from those of the other countries, due to its decision to freeze its application for 2 years. This interruption has given rise to significant delays which will require particular effort by Malta so as to give these preparations fresh momentum. The development of a broad-ranging national plan outlining both economic and legislative measures with a view to accession will help this process. The Commission intends to propose a detailed account of the state of progress of the preparations of Malta's candidacy, within the framework of its regular report on Malta, to be published at the end of 1999.