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11. Points to the need for indirect Community research and technological development measures under the fourth framework programme to allow wide scope for innovative energy technologies capable of providing an adequate response to the desire to give preference to renewable sources and current demand for applications and consumption of natural gas, particularly in sectors such as liquefaction, transportation and regasification, in view of the potential of new forms of supply from remote areas; recognizes furthermore that, taking into the account the important role played by the nuclear sector in producing electricity in the European Union and its contribution to reducing energy dependence, the Community institutions should take part in its development, given the potential of nuclear power to increase the range of energy options, and in particular to reduce the EU's CO₂ emissions in accordance with international agreements;
12. Recalls its support for the drawing up of a framework programme for EU energy policy contributing to clarifying and focusing Community initiatives in this field and ensuring a level of multiannual funding which would allow the deployment of significant measures, in particular in the field of renewable energy, but without any structural reduction in the funding available;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council.

8. Luxembourg European Councils – Luxembourg presidency

B4-1048, 1094, 1095 and 1096/97

Resolution on the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Councils of 21 November and 12 and 13 December 1997 and on the term of office of the Luxembourg Presidency

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the conclusions of the Madrid, Florence, Dublin and Amsterdam European Councils,
 - having regard to its resolution of 19 November 1997 on the Amsterdam Treaty ⁽¹⁾,
 - recalling its resolutions of 4 December 1997 on the Commission communication 'Agenda 2000 – For a stronger and wider Union' ⁽²⁾ and on the Commission communication 'Agenda 2000: the 2000-2006 financial framework for the Union and the future financing system' ⁽³⁾,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council,
 - having regard to the Council report and the Commission statement on the meetings of the European Council of 21 November and 12 and 13 December 1997 in Luxembourg.
1. Welcomes the fact that the Luxembourg European Council has at last cleared the way to overcoming the division of Europe and that the European Union, a community of peace and liberty, has been opened up to Central and Eastern European states and Cyprus;
 2. Acknowledges the effectiveness shown and the results achieved by the Luxembourg Presidency in the fields of employment, enlargement, Economic and Monetary Union and Justice and Home Affairs;
 3. Commends the way in which the Luxembourg Presidency has cooperated with Parliament in the abovementioned areas as well as in the budgetary procedure;

⁽¹⁾ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 20.

⁽²⁾ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 3(a).

⁽³⁾ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 3(b).

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Revision of the Treaty on European Union

4. Notes with satisfaction the fact that the European Council is making institutional reform a prerequisite for any enlargement, regrets that it has not specified the nature and scope of the reforms to be carried out to ensure the smooth functioning of an enlarged Union, and invites it, on the basis of its abovementioned resolution on the Amsterdam Treaty, to begin its work in this connection and, within this framework, to enter into a political dialogue with the European Parliament;

Enlargement

5. Welcomes the European Council's decision on the accession and negotiating process, starting with a meeting on 30 March 1998 between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the 15 Member States, of the ten applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe and of Cyprus;

6. Furthermore underlines the fact, as does the European Council, that all these countries' applications for accession will be judged according to the same criteria and that they participate in the accession process on an equal footing;

7. Welcomes the creation of the 'accession partnership' for each of the applicant countries as an instrument to bring together that country's efforts in adopting and implementing the *acquis communautaire* and fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria, on the one hand, and all available financial assistance from EU sources, including the PHARE programme, on the other;

8. Regrets that the European Council makes no reference to consultation of Parliament on the common framework for the partnerships and on the content of the individual partnership agreements;

9. Agrees with the European Council on the countries which have made the most progress in meeting the criteria for the accession and negotiating process and reiterates its call for intensive negotiations with those countries to begin, while reinforcing and accelerating the preparation of negotiations with the remaining countries;

10. Stresses, as does the European Council, that the opening of the accession and negotiating process with all applicant countries together, and the start of intensive bilateral negotiations with six of them, does not automatically imply that these negotiations will be concluded for the various applicant countries at the same time;

11. Requests that also the Slovak Republic benefit from the reinforced pre-accession strategy so that negotiations can start immediately when the political conditions laid down in Copenhagen are met, and in order to continue to adapt its economy to the conditions of the single market; calls, in particular, for the accession partnership to be negotiated with this country to make provision for measures in the sphere of democracy — including minority rights — and for the democracy-related appropriations from the PHARE programme to be used to support the measures which will be determined by joint agreement in this sphere;

12. Shares the European Council's view of the special significance of Cypriot accession; welcomes the commitment of the Presidency and the Commission, in cooperation with the Government of Cyprus, to secure the inclusion of representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community in the accession negotiation delegation, and calls on Turkey to refrain from any unilateral steps that may hinder the accession process;

13. Welcomes the decision to create the European Conference inviting the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Cyprus and Turkey to meet the EU Member States; requests the European Council to reconsider its refusal to invite the President of Parliament to the meeting at the level of Heads of State and Government, including the Commission President;

14. Recalls its view that there is a need for a special relationship with Turkey at a high level that goes beyond the existing Customs Union; welcomes the European Council's confirmation of Turkish eligibility for accession to the EU, its commitment to judge Turkey by the same criteria as the other applicant states, and its recognition that a strategy must be drawn up to prepare it for accession; calls on Turkey to re-examine its early reaction to the invitation to participate in the European Conference; urges Turkey to look again at the real opportunities which these decisions offer for an ever closer relationship;

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- 15. Calls on the Commission and the Council to provide specific confirmation of the fact that the development aid policy implemented by the European Union, in particular by means of the Lomé conventions, is one of the Union's permanent features which must be perpetuated and which the countries applying for accession will be required to accept;

Evolution of Union policies: Agenda 2000

16. Notes the European Council's response to the Agenda 2000 proposals on the evolution of Union policies, recalls its views, as set out in its abovementioned resolutions of 4 December 1997, and awaits with interest the proposals which the Council has invited the Commission to present on Union policies and on the financial framework;

17. Calls on the Commission to present all the reforms of the different Common Market Organizations as outlined in Agenda 2000, including the Mediterranean products and ensuring a coherent approach to all sectors, and to extend the 1992 CAP reform to cover the major Mediterranean products; recalls that the objectives of cohesion, the quality and safety of agricultural products and better integration of environmental elements into production methods are still the foundations of future agricultural policy;

18. Emphasizes the desirability of carrying out a review of the system of own resources;

19. Welcomes the decision to base financial support to the countries in the enlargement process on the principle of equal treatment, with particular attention to those countries with the greatest need;

20. Insists on the need for the Council and the Commission to guarantee, in agreement with Parliament, a reform of the Structural Funds which improves and deepens the economic and social cohesion policy within the Union; welcomes the recognition of the importance of the Structural Funds for job creation; underlines the value of regional cooperation with and among applicant countries and asks for all initiatives in this area to be strengthened;

21. Observes that the European Council's conclusions endorse its own view that the cost of enlargement must be clearly and distinctly mentioned in the next financial perspectives and asks the Commission to make proposals accordingly;

22. Welcomes the decision to ask the Commission for a report on the Nordic dimension of the policies of the EU;

Economic and Monetary Union

23. Welcomes the improved coordination of economic policies (which will also be extended to Member States not included in the euro zone) in order to strengthen monetary union and ensure growth and employment, as outlined in the resolution contained in Annex 1 of the conclusions of the European Council; welcomes as well the European Council's determination to transform the broad economic guidelines into an effective instrument for ensuring sustained convergence of Member States' economic policies and calls for the implementation of the points made in its resolution of 4 December 1997 on economic policy coordination in the Stage 3 of EMU: common ground and ways forward⁽¹⁾;

24. Regrets that the issue of transparency in the process of economic policy coordination was not addressed by the European Council; expresses particular concern at the provision to restrict meetings of the Ecofin Council to 'minister plus one official'; stresses that, in order to inject an element of transparency into the coordination process, Parliament's role in the procedure set out in Articles 103 and 104 of the Treaty must be strengthened;

25. Considers, furthermore, that the vital euro project will create its own momentum towards integration;

26. Expresses the wish that all the states which fulfil the Maastricht criteria should be among the first group of EMU participants;

⁽¹⁾ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 4.

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*27. Welcomes the mandate given to the Council and to the European Central Bank concerning the external representation of the Union in monetary affairs *vis-à-vis* international bodies as well as with regard to relations with third States;

28. Reiterates its view that the Economic and Finance Committee should consist of representatives whose powers fully cover the economic policy element of the committee's remit; stresses that members of the committee should be obliged to appear regularly before Parliament's competent committee;

29. Welcomes the recognition that, while ministers of Member States participating in the euro area may meet informally among themselves to discuss issues connected with their shared specific responsibilities, matters of common interest will be discussed by ministers of all Member States; welcomes in particular the recognition that the Ecofin Council is the only body empowered by the Treaty to formulate and adopt the broad economic guidelines;

30. Regrets, however, that the European Council was not in a position to appoint the future Governor of the Central Bank, since any delay in this connection cannot but harm confidence in monetary union;

Social aspects and employment

31. Thanks the Luxembourg Presidency for its great commitment and negotiating skills, making the Employment Summit a great success with tangible results which also reflect the European Parliament's demands;

32. Believes that the mechanisms adopted at the Luxembourg Employment Summit could mark an important start for a more effective fight against unemployment in the EU; asks for the procedures set up in the Treaty of Amsterdam for the establishment of economic and employment guidelines to be conducted in parallel, in order to ensure better coordination between macroeconomic and structural measures; asks the Commission to ensure that a high quality level of any measure needed for the implementation of guidelines is taken into account by Member States;

33. Calls for the procedure foreseen in Article 103 of the Treaty, and the procedure foreseen in the future Article 128 of the Treaty, to be synchronized and carried out under the auspices of both the Ecofin Council and the Social Affairs Council;

34. Believes that the governments should play a key role in creating a fiscal and legislative environment to promote social partners' negotiations for reduction of working time;

35. Welcomes the employment guidelines to be regularly monitored under a common procedure and incorporated into national employment action plans in a multiannual perspective as a first step towards a coordinated European policy to overcome unemployment;

36. Asks the Member States, in cooperation with the Commission, better to coordinate their strategy approaches on human resources development; believes that, in order to ensure a high-quality European workforce, the national budgets devoted to this scope should be substantially increased;

37. Welcomes in particular the results of the Luxemburg Employment Summit concerning the endorsement of the need to foster entrepreneurship, to improve employability and adaptability as well as to implement equal opportunities;

38. Asks the Council and the Commission to ensure that the financial facilities for SMEs will have a lasting impact on job creation, providing in particular development and training plans, both for managers and workers;

39. Asks the Commission to set up, as soon as possible, the High Level Group of experts responsible for addressing the problem of industrial change and its impact on employment, ensuring a balance of interest in the composition of the Group;

40. Reminds the Council and the Commission of the strategic interest of territorially based pilot projects, also in the third sector, in promoting innovative patterns of job creation and the diffusion of best practices;

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Internal market

41. Welcomes the joint working programme of the Luxembourg, British and Austrian presidencies which guarantees the continuity of efforts to achieve the declared objective of the completion of the internal market;

42. Endorses the 'scoreboard' submitted by the Commission as a tool for making the Member States more aware of their responsibilities for the transposition and application, by the deadline laid down, of Community Directives already approved and welcomes in particular the conclusion of the procedure for the adoption of the Directive to facilitate the permanent exercise of the profession of lawyer in a Member State other than that in which the qualification was acquired;

Fiscal matters

43. Welcomes the resolve to reduce harmful tax competition between Member States by reducing existing distortions, and considers the code of conduct to be an appropriate first step to avoid harmful tax competition;

44. Welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Luxembourg Presidency to relaunch the negotiations with a view to harmonization of legislation on taxation on savings, and asks the Council to decide as soon as possible on a clear and short timetable for decisions on all pending tax issues;

Justice and home affairs

45. Appreciates the practice of the Luxembourg Presidency of anticipating the consultation procedure contained in the Amsterdam Treaty which improves European cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs, and urges the UK and the following presidencies to continue this practice until the entry into force of the Amsterdam Treaty;

46. Welcomes the progress achieved over the last six months in this area, and shares the regret of the European Council that an important step in the fight against organized crime — the ratification of the Europol Convention — has not yet been completed; regrets that, to date, none of the third pillar conventions adopted has been ratified by all Member States; regrets also the continuing inertia in the Council over the free movement of persons;

The Middle East peace process

47. Welcomes the Council's conclusions on the Middle East peace process and shares the European Council's deep concern over the lack of progress in implementing the Interim Agreements and the Hebron Protocol and the continuing impasse with Syria and Lebanon;

48. Considers that a special effort should be made by all the parties concerned in order to ensure resumption of the peace process so as to make it possible to move forward to negotiation of the aspects set out in the final phase of the Oslo Agreements;

49. Stresses the importance of the adoption of the code of conduct prepared by the European Union and of effective dialogue being resumed between all the countries in the region;

50. Stresses the importance of people-to-people programmes as an essential means of reinforcing dialogue and restoring mutual confidence between the parties at the level of civil society;

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51. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the European Council, the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.