

**The Commission's programme
for 1997**

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**Presentation to the European Parliament
by President Jacques Santer**

Strasbourg, 22 October 1996

**Resolution of the European Parliament
on the programme for 1997**

A great deal of additional information on the European Union is available on the Internet. It can be accessed through the Europa server (<http://europa.eu.int>)

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication

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The Commission's work programme for 1997

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Political priorities

When its appointment was confirmed in 1995, the Commission spelled out, for its full term of office, the main thrust of its action. The emphasis was put on growth and employment, the European model of society based on solidarity, the idea that Europe should make its presence felt more strongly on the international scene, and the important events that Europe should be preparing for.

The 1997 work programme is designed to bring us closer to those objectives. In implementing it, the Commission will be guided by the need to demonstrate that the Union **benefits everybody** and that it is efficient.

The Union can and must provide its people with something they would not otherwise have. The Commission intends to promote this dynamic interpretation of its **right of initiative**. Each separate issue must be dealt with at the right level.

The Commission will not hesitate in 1997 to take initiatives the moment it is sure that a matter of common interest cannot be dealt with effectively without Union action. Subsidiarity and proportionality must not be used as pretexts to call into question all that the Community has already achieved or to return to the intergovernmental method which is neither efficient nor democratic.

The Union has to be efficient. The best way for the Commission to demonstrate its determination in this respect is to take a rigorous approach to its own management. Far-reaching reforms will be set in motion in 1997, to modernize the way the Commission is run and improve its performance. The reforms will concentrate on three key concepts: decentralization, rationalization and simplification.

The same **rigour** will be applied to the tasks which are conferred on the Commission by the Treaty and which it carries out as part of its day-to-day activities and in implementing Community policies. It is important to realize that a large part of the Commission's work is connected with its **executive role**, in particular in connection with the common agricultural policy, the single market and the management of the Structural Funds.

The Commission must continually strive for **openness** and try to ensure that its proposals are both readable and appropriate. Three information operations will be mounted for the general public: 'Building Europe together', 'Citizens First' and 'The euro, a currency for Europe'. The Commission will also start on the third phase of the SEM 2000 Programme — sound and efficient management. This project must now turn its attention to increasing the degree of cooperation between the European institutions and the Member States. In the Commission's view, it is essential that the Member States take part in the drive to tighten up the way the Community manages the European taxpayers' money and implement the agreements on measures to combat fraud. The Commission will also take tougher action in this field.

Building Europe means working for peace, prosperity and well-being. It means working for the people of Europe. As economic globalization and changing social structures make European integration more indispensable than ever, the Commission will endeavour to attain these objectives both in working towards the major priorities (economic and monetary union, the Confidence Pact for Employment, the Intergovernmental Conference and enlargement) and in day-to-day management.

Building on the foundations of this approach, the Commission's 1997 work programme will focus on four main priority areas: **growth and employment and the euro, promotion of the European model of society, Europe's role in the world and preparations for the Union's future**.

Growth and employment and the euro

Ever since the Essen European Council, it has been clear that only a medium and long-term strategy is capable of delivering the hope of a better future for the people of Europe. The **European Confidence Pact** was born of this realization: the initiative clearly establishes and increases the responsibilities of the various groups involved, both at European and at

national level. In 1997, the Commission intends to continue with and build on the measures associated with the Pact and capitalize on the multiplier effect with regard to employment and sustainable growth. It plans to assess progress at regular intervals and to pay more attention to determining what still has to be done. Its efforts will revolve around the four pillars of the Confidence Pact: macroeconomic policy, the single market, employment systems and structural policies.

Sound macroeconomic policy

Building on the foundations laid by the successful Madrid European Council, decisive progress will have been made towards **economic and monetary union (EMU)** by the end of 1996. The result will be a favourable climate which will enable the **euro** to be introduced, on schedule, on 1 January 1999, with a good number of Member States on board from the very beginning. 1997 will be a key year in this process. The task will be to complete the preparations for the transition to the third stage of EMU, while at the same time improving convergence and coordination of economic policies. The Commission will take an active part in determining the new exchange rate system between the euro and the currencies of the countries not participating in EMU. It will produce a report at the end of the year assessing the degree of convergence achieved by Member States in preparation for the decision to be taken by the European Council as early as possible in 1998 for embarking on the third stage of EMU.

Completing the single market

The single market is shaping up, but is not yet complete. The Employment Pact calls for the single market to be made fully operational. It is vital that the Council and Parliament enact the missing legislation in 1997, in particular legislation on the statute of the European company, the legal framework for biotechnological inventions and the single market in gas. At the same time, the Commission, in its cooperation with the Member States and in handling infringement procedures, will step up the pressure on Member States to transpose directives into national law and apply them properly. This must be accompanied by implementation of the **competition** policy. In 1997 the Commission

will adopt measures for the distribution sector and State aid which should make the applicable legislation clearer. It will also take steps to decentralize the handling of some infringements of competition rules, to simplify procedures and to step up cooperation with the national authorities. Criteria will be laid down for targeting Commission action with greater accuracy. Liberalization will continue, but public-interest obligations and the interests of consumers will be fully taken into account.

Amongst the many policy guidelines due to be adopted at the Dublin European Council, the **simplification of single market legislation**, and in particular the SLIM pilot project, will be singled out for special attention.

The legislative environment resulting from these guidelines will fail to satisfy, however, unless it helps create jobs in the increasingly important services sector, particularly the information society and audiovisual services. Practical measures to be agreed on at the Dublin European Council will be implemented in 1997 to remove any obstacles which hinder the development of the services sector.

In 1996 the Commission also launched an in-depth examination of **tax policies** in Europe. Practical conclusions will be forthcoming in 1997. The Commission will speed up the drafting of guidelines for closer coordination of tax policy in Europe. One of the main aims will be to reverse the current trend towards imposing compulsory charges and levies on employment.

Improving the competitive environment in Europe

The single market provides an essential basis for an environment which encourages job creation. If European businesses are to derive maximum benefit, it will be necessary to help industry to become more competitive, for example in space technology and electronic trading, create an environment which enables small and medium-sized businesses to thrive, build a healthy scientific and technological base, stimulate innovation, help the sunrise industries and the information society to advance, and invest in infrastructure.

The Commission's main priority for **research and technological development** in 1997 will be to present the fifth framework programme,

which will devote considerable attention to research geared towards meeting the ordinary people's needs in areas such as health-care, nutrition and the way we live. The Commission also intends to make use of the potential of the Joint Research Centre to develop know-how and technology in important areas such as the prevention of disease and technological risks and the analysis of product quality.

Following up its Green Paper and action plan, the Commission will propose concrete measures on **innovation**.

Priority concerning the **information society** will be given to implementation of a new action plan. The Commission will also have to complete the regulatory framework for policy on **telecommunications** and make sure that the measures are transposed into national law by the Member States, so that the telecommunications industry is fully open to competition by 1 January 1988.

Modern and efficient **infrastructure** is an objective *sine qua non* for Europe's prosperity and the harmonious development of its regions. Hence the Commission would like everything possible to be done to expand the trans-European networks and make them work efficiently. The financing of transport networks, notably with greater involvement of public and private-sector partnership, is a priority as is the launching of rail freight freeways. The Commission calls for completion of the single market in transport, energy and telecommunications.

Speeding up reform of employment systems

In 1997, the Commission will do all it can to put into practice the recommendations on reforming employment systems made in the Confidence Pact. In so doing, it will liaise closely with the Member States and the social partners. It will contribute to the joint Council-Commission report for the European Council on employment.

This should result in active national employment policies aimed at addressing real problems. In this connection, the Commission would welcome improvements to the procedure for monitoring multiannual national programmes. The Commission also intends to

stimulate the process of launching the major projects on the future of work.

The Commission will highlight the contribution made by **social policy** to economic performance. Specific work will be carried out in the areas of equality of opportunity, social protection, the role of the social partners, the organization of work and worker information and consultation.

Adjusting structural policies

The Community needs **structural policies** which are effective weapons in the fight against unemployment and in narrowing the gap between rich and poor and thus contribute to economic and social cohesion. The Commission will propose amendments in 1997, the year in which Objective 1 (regions whose development is lagging behind) is due for a mid-term review and programmes are produced for the new period 1997-99 for Objective 2 (regions undergoing conversion). New guidelines will be presented for rural development policy. The Commission has also proposed local employment pacts involving regional and local organizations in measures and projects to help create jobs.

The European model of society

The single currency and the single market are by no means objectives in their own right but instruments intended to serve the needs of the population as a whole and the overriding goal of employment in particular. However, the Commission wants to go further still and build a Europe of solidarity with a human face faithful to its own model of society and closer to each individual's concerns.

Education and training must be used as priority levers to this end. The Commission will take initiatives concerning access to continuing training and lifelong acquisition and accreditation of skills. The proposal concerning European articles of apprenticeship, the launching of an Erasmus apprenticeship programme and the implementation of the plan of action on learning in the information society are examples of what Europe can do at its level.

1997 will also see the presentation of pilot measures to follow up the White Paper 'Teaching and learning — towards the learning society' and the Green Paper on obstacles to transnational mobility. The European voluntary service will be launched in its definitive form on the basis of the current pilot scheme. In this way Europe is moving closer to young people.

Economic and social cohesion and the related Community instruments contribute directly to the specific nature of the European model of society. In 1997, the Commission will take steps to adapt and strengthen the cohesion policy. A development strategy for the territory of the Community will be drawn up in conjunction with the Member States. Cross-border cooperation will be stepped up.

A Europe which shows solidarity implies a need for it to be attentive to the quality of life, the interests of **consumers** and the role of services of general interest. The Commission will make every effort in this direction. It will, for example, continue to show great vigilance in the area of foodstuffs.

The priorities for the **environment** which emerged from the review of the fifth programme serve to mark out areas for action in the years to come: incorporation of the environment factor in other Community policies, further development of the instruments of environmental protection, transposition and application of Community legislation, and international cooperation. The Commission will act as a driving force in the preparations for the follow-up conference to the Rio Summit.

Europe must also form a genuine area of **freedom** and **security**. All remaining barriers to the free movement of persons must be eliminated. The Commission will propose practical measures in the light of analyses made by the high-level group set up for this purpose. However, drugs, terrorism and organized crime and trafficking and sexual exploitation of the most vulnerable members of society are scourges which eat away at the very heart of our societies, and they do not stop at any frontier. Every possible measure must therefore be taken to combat them. Cooperation in the field of justice and home affairs must seek to achieve tangible results. The Commission will press for decisions to be taken to this effect. Admittedly, the ability of the institutional apparatus to meet challenges of this magnitude is inadequate.

Being fully aware of this fact, the Commission will continue to fight for the existing mechanisms to be reinforced during the Intergovernmental Conference. The Commission will deploy every means at its disposal to satisfy the legitimate expectations of the European public.

Europe's presence on the international stage

While Europe has woven a dense web of relations with all parts of the world and is the biggest donor of development aid, its foreign policy sometimes gives the impression of an incomplete whole. But what is more serious is the fact that it has failed to integrate the various instruments at its disposal into a coherent and effective approach. Hence the impression that Europe does not have the political clout to match its economic and commercial importance.

External relations are by nature unsuited to annual programming; they are gradually built up over time.

The Commission will accordingly endeavour to develop **relations with a number of non-member countries** in 1997, and in particular: the associated countries concerned by the prospects of enlargement; the United States in the spirit of the New Transatlantic Agenda; the countries of former Yugoslavia with the consolidation of the peace process and the efforts at reconstruction; the Mediterranean countries with the development of the partnership established by the Barcelona Conference; Russia; China; Asia, in particular in the framework of ASEM; Latin America; the ACP States; and South Africa.

In its activities and contribution to the Intergovernmental Conference, the Commission will safeguard the effectiveness and coherence of the common **commercial policy**, which has to be adapted to take account of the actual state of international economic relations. 1997 will be marked by the activation of the work programme decided on at the World Trade Organization ministerial conference in Singapore in December 1996. In this context the Commission will endeavour to make progress on such key issues as trade and the environment, the social clause and competition. It will also be necessary to conclude the negotiations on liberalization of telecommunications and financial

services. 1997 will also see the full-scale implementation of the strategy for access to the markets of third countries. An additional component in this set-up will be provided by the inauguration by the Commission of an interactive database on access to markets.

In addition to the general thought being given to the future relationship between the ACP and the EU, priority in **development policy** will be attached to the implementation of the eighth tranche of the European Development Fund and ways and means of enhancing the effectiveness of development aid. Greater coordination between donors and stricter control of the quality of cooperation measures are two matters requiring particular attention.

The Commission will continue to press for respect for human rights and democracy; this will include action in international forums.

In 1997, the Commission will continue its **humanitarian activities** in meeting the needs of populations in distress, refugees and victims of conflict and natural disasters. This expression of European solidarity will focus not only on major crisis areas (African Great Lakes, former Yugoslavia) but also other regions where the situation is less well known. 1997 will also be marked by the further implementation of the new regulation on humanitarian aid.

Preparing for the future

1997 will see the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC). It has to accomplish radical reforms if the Union is to respond effectively to the challenge of enlargement.

The Commission, referring to its opinion on the Intergovernmental Conference, will accordingly seek to set ambitious targets. The Commission's view is that the Conference will need to focus on three priority objectives. First, produce an institutional system enabling an enlarged Union to operate efficiently. The insistence on unanimity and the complexity of the existing decision-making procedures would paralyse the Union. Second, come up with real answers to the public's concern about matters such as internal security, employment and the environment. Third, give the Union a genuine external policy. This will mean adjusting the common commercial policy and external economic relations to the changes in the modern world, and undertaking a thorough reform of

the CFSP. The Union's identity as perceived by the rest of the world must be one of coherence, effectiveness and visibility.

Enlargement and the Union's **financial framework** after the expiry of the current financial perspective in 1999 are two closely related matters which together make up '**Agenda 2000**'. The preparations for this exceptional challenge for the end of the century will enter a new decisive phase in 1997.

After the conclusion of the IGC the Commission will present a number of major documents in accordance with the conclusions of the Madrid European Council (December 1995). First of all, the opinions on each of the applications for accession. The Commission will apply the appropriate rigour and objectiveness in preparing these opinions, with no preconceived ideas and no fears about stating the truth.

Secondly, a general document setting out a coherent approach to the whole issue of enlargement. In this context the Commission will make a detailed assessment of the impact of enlargement on Union policies.

Finally, a communication on the financial framework from 2000 onwards. This exercise, which is not easy at any time, will be made even more difficult by the prospect of enlargement. It will obviously have to be accompanied by a very careful look at the future of the Community policies, in particular the common agricultural policy and structural policies.

Conclusion

1997 will be very much influenced by the major developments looming ahead for the Union: the Intergovernmental Conference, economic and monetary union, the post-1999 financial package, enlargement. In many respects it will be a milestone as work on the reform of the Treaties is completed and gives way to Agenda 2000. The Union will also enter into the final phase of the preparations for the decision in spring 1998 on the third stage of EMU.

The Commission will have the decisive role to play in getting work on Agenda 2000 actually started. It will be for the Commission to conduct a thorough appraisal of the situation and to work out a coherent approach in the

interests of the entire Union and its members, both present and future.

So that the Member States and the other institutions can assume their responsibilities, the Commission will assume its own.

These major developments will shape the Union of the 21st century. But while it is necessary to design tomorrow's Europe, we must not forget today's world and ignore the public's concerns. Unemployment is undermin-

ing our society and sapping confidence in the institutions, both national and European. The Commission cannot create jobs by itself. But it can help to work out a common strategy and call on the actors to assume their responsibilities. This is the point of the Confidence Pact for Employment proposed in 1996. The process that was set in motion will have to continue and gather momentum in 1997. A Europe which generates growth and creates jobs will be better able to rise to the challenges of Agenda 2000.

New legislative proposals

The measures set out below for the Commission's 1997 work programme correspond to the new legislative proposals which it plans to present. These are all new measures: adaptations or amendments of existing legislation are not included. Proposals already programmed in previous years are not reproduced here.

- Strengthening of convergence for Member States not participating in the third stage of EMU (Art. 103(5))
- VAT: Broad principles of operation in line with the needs of the single market¹
- Indirect taxation: mutual assistance for the recovery of public, tax and customs debts
- Primary products in the pharmaceutical industry¹
- Compulsory third-party insurance for motorists (visiting motorists Directive)
- Encrypted services (follow-up to Green Paper of 6.3.1996)¹
- Harmonization of copyright and related rights (follow-up to Green Paper on copyright and related rights in the information society)¹
- Common system of taxation applicable to interest and royalty payments made between parent companies and subsidiaries in different Member States¹
- Fifth framework programme for research and technological development (R&TD): European research in the service of the citizen
- Environmental control of plant not covered by the integrated pollution control Directive¹
- Training of safety advisers for the transport of dangerous goods by road, rail and inland waterway¹
- Composition of ship crews, rest time and sailing time¹
- Framework for noise measurement and noise monitoring around airports (CTP)²
- Issuing of air carrier certificates (transposal of JAR-OPS)
- Harmonization measures required for the deployment of telematics for road transport¹
- European voluntary service for young people

¹ Proposals likely to give rise to an assessment of impact on enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises.

² Proposals likely to give rise to an environmental impact assessment.

Presentation of the Commission's
work programme for 1997
to the European Parliament
by President Jacques Santer

Mr President,
Honourable Members,

A month ago, when your House was debating the state of the Union, I told you of my concern that the citizens of all our countries are showing less and less confidence in politicians and in the structures of our law-based constitutional systems.

This is an observation which applies to the Union itself.

Actually, this lack of confidence is also a challenge. It means that our institutions need a full-scale overhaul, to make them more democratic. In our day-to-day work, too, it requires us to concentrate our minds on why Europe's citizens feel so helpless and confused. The reasons are all too familiar: unemployment, insecurity and the feeling, sometimes justified, that the whole world is becoming dehumanized.

I will sum up the essence of the Commission's programme for 1997 in a couple of phrases: reforming what does not work, and concentrating on the real priorities.

What will be the spirit in which this programme will develop? First of all, it will be the spirit of my confirmation speech, which I put before you in the form of a five-year programme, and for which you gave me your support.

Secondly, our programme for 1997 will, more than ever, be grounded in a belief which you share with the Commission.

The belief is that Europe

- has to exist, and is genuinely here to serve everyone; and
- actually works.

The Union has to exist for every situation where the citizen's interest is better served by acting together than acting separately. That is true inside the Union, and it is true on the international stage. The Commission is convinced that we must act less in order to act better. But on the other hand, in 1997, as before, it will not baulk at taking steps whenever it firmly believes that a contribution from the Union is needed if a question of common interest has to be addressed.

I will not allow subsidiarity to be used as a pretext for calling Community law and 40

years of shared effort back into question. Let us not take our achievements lightly. Let us not put them at risk.

As it takes stock of 1996, the Commission sees that a great deal has been accomplished. There have been major advances in many areas vital to the life of the Community. To take three examples:

- the European Confidence Pact for Employment which I set rolling in this House on 31 January has made people aware of the issues at stake. It is up to us now to produce some results;
- EMU is now on the road;
- the information society has scored some notable breakthroughs.

We have not, of course, launched certain of the initiatives which we announced. Other exercises, on the other hand, and important ones at that, although they could not have been foreseen when the programme for 1996 was put before you, have been carried out. We have learned the requisite lessons from this situation.

I propose, then, that for 1997 we concentrate on the real priorities. Those are what I will put before you now, by going through the broad lines of the Commission's programme for the coming year.

The first evidence of the Commission's determination here will be that it takes a rigorous approach to its own internal management. I give you my personal commitment to that. In 1997 the Commission will set about a thoroughgoing reform, designed to modernize its working practices and improve the work it does.

The same strict approach will be applied to the executive tasks which the Treaty assigns to the Commission and which it is responsible for managing on a day-to-day basis.

And, lastly, the management of the Community's policies will be tightened up. In 1997 we will be launching the third stage of the SEM 2000 programme for sound and efficient management.

Our task this year is to work for greater cooperation between the European institutions and the Member States. It is essential that the Member States involve themselves directly in strictly managing European taxpayers' money.

1997 will be a year heavily influenced by what I call the important deadlines: the Intergovernmental Conference, economic and monetary union, the financial framework for the future and enlargement. It will mark a turning point in a number of ways, as work on the Treaty review is superseded by the Agenda for 2000.

I will come back to these, but firstly I would like to speak in a little more detail about our programme for next year.

The 1997 programme

The chief feature of the programme is well-thought-out, consistent and sustainable action. The institutional set-up in the Union makes this possible: the Commission's five-year term of office now matches the life of the European Parliament.

Faced with the questions which Europe has to solve, churning out spectacular declarations every morning is no longer an adequate response. Europeans do not believe them. And they are right. We must not let the feeling that something must be done betray us into rushing ahead and adopting new initiatives in dispersed order.

No, what we must do is think carefully over what we are doing, and then act with firmness and determination. That is what needs to be done.

For 1997, therefore, the Commission has set itself four policy priorities, in keeping with the broad lines it set itself two years ago for the whole of its term of office:

- supporting growth and employment and getting ourselves ready for the euro;
- taking practical steps to promote the European social model;
- enhancing Europe's profile in the international arena; and
- preparing for the future.

The first priority: growth, employment and the euro

The **first priority** in the Commission's programme is to give effect to the Confidence Pact for Employment. I am very attached to the

Pact. Please do not think that I am prepared to abandon a scheme which in my view is the essential precondition for meeting the challenges of the year 2000. No, ladies and gentlemen, it was not just an empty gesture. To those who are not convinced, let me say: Just read it! We must restore confidence. That is what the Pact is about. We need a comprehensive strategy, a consistent strategy, a practical strategy for employment. And we must all play our parts!

That is my ambition, and I trust it will be yours. A large part of the Commission's work in 1997 will be directed towards giving practical form to the plans laid in the Confidence Pact.

1. Sound macroeconomic policy

To bring this about we hold a winning card: growth. It is starting to move again. If it is to be sustained, it must be grounded on sound macroeconomic policies.

This year, the penultimate year before monetary union, the Commission will once again be taking care to ensure that the Member States take the requisite steps to achieve the convergence needed as the foundation for the single currency. Studying the budgets which governments have adopted prompts an inescapable conclusion: the Member States have taken on their responsibilities for the year ahead. I am delighted that the Finnish markka has joined the European Monetary System. It proves that I am still right in believing that the single currency will become a reality in a significant number of countries on 1 January 1999.

The Commission has been right not to give way. Do not forget, not all that long ago we were the ones that held to our course against more or less universal opposition. We will soon be seeing the beneficial effects on employment — for employment is the real target. EMU is nothing but a means to that end. As for the Confidence Pact, it brings that target within our sights by setting up structural measures whose object is to maximize Community-generated added-value and make the most of growth.

2. Completing the internal market

The first of these measures is to complete the internal market. I say complete it because, as

you know, there is still some way to the final target. Let me cite just a few of the points on which we need to make progress in the coming year: the internal market in gas, the legal framework for biotechnology and the European company statute — not forgetting the multiannual programme for small businesses.

We need to complete the internal market, but we also need to make it simpler. The Commission will work to meet that need.

3. Speeding up reforms in employment systems

The third line of action in the Confidence Pact is to reform employment systems. We need active national policies, commensurate with what is at stake. The Commission, in close conjunction with the Member States and the social partners, will press for progress on the Pact's recommendations here. And it will encourage the launching of major employment projects.

In 1997 the Commission will put forward practical proposals on access to continuing training and the life-long acquisition and use of new skills. It will bring into effect the action plan for 'learning in the information society'. It will launch an Erasmus apprenticeship programme. The point of all this is simply to adapt ourselves to the changes affecting work and the place it occupies in all our lives.

4. Adapting the structural policies

Proceeding from the same concern, we will reshape the Union's structural policies in 1997. The mid-term review of Objective 1, focusing on regions where development is lagging behind, and the planning of Objective 2, for regions undergoing conversion, to cover the 1997-99 period give us the opportunity we need. The criterion for these reviews will be employment.

The Commission has proposed territorial pacts for employment, and they have been very well received. They will be fleshed out in 1997.

The second priority: the European social model

There are two topics which have attracted public attention in 1996: globalization and the European social model. The fact that the two have emerged together is no coincidence. I have sensed a growing public awareness among Europeans. They believe that our social model is the proper response to globalization. We must not disappoint rising expectations: this year the Commission will take steps to develop that model still further. That is our **second priority**. The Commission will press on with the kind of action which helps to forge a European social model centred on solidarity and a concept of growth which attaches greater importance to quality.

- Social policy;
- education and training;
- equal opportunities;
- economic and social cohesion;
- consumer policy; and
- the environment;

these are the basic building blocks of the model.

In this context, I would like to underline that progress towards better environmental protection and sustainable development will be a major preoccupation of the Commission in 1997. We will seek to ensure that the Union plays a leading role in the preparation of the UN General Assembly Special Session on the environment and sustainable development five years after the Rio Earth Summit and in the Conference of the Parties on the Climate Change Convention.

There is another area in which the Commission has sensed a pressing demand from the Union's citizens in 1996, and that is the area of freedom of movement in the Union and security in the face of worsening problems such as the spread of drugs, trafficking and sexual exploitation, terrorism, violence and organized crime. What we have found is that, of the four freedoms enshrined in the Treaty, freedom of movement for individuals is the least effectively secured. Our fellow-citizens do not feel they are being protected more effectively. They cannot understand why we do not give them the resources

they need to stave off the threats to their security.

The Commission is therefore calling for the Intergovernmental Conference to bring a great many matters in the sphere of justice and home affairs within the remit of the Community, whenever that would be a better way of ensuring that our efforts counted for something. Meanwhile, the Commission is doing everything in its power to meet the legitimate expectations of Europe's citizens.

The European model has to be built within Europe; it has to be defended and promoted in the rest of the world. Giving Europe a higher profile on the international stage is the Commission's **third target** for 1997.

The third priority: a strong European presence in the international arena

The European Union already assumes a key role in many regions of the world, notably in the Middle East, in Bosnia and in the countries of the former Soviet Union.

There will be many items on our agenda, and I fear that if I mention a few of them I may overlook some important ones. We will pursue action wherever it is already under way, and I need hardly tell you that there are few if any regions where our presence is not felt.

Among the new areas of endeavour, may I remind you that there will be a Commission Green Paper on relations with our partners in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific in the autumn. This will be matter for in-depth discussion right into 1997.

In all it does, the Commission will be at pains to ensure that the European Union is acknowledged to exert political influence commensurate with its financial commitment. That influence will be felt only if we preserve full cohesion among ourselves and a constant resolve to work together.

Affirming the role of the European Union depends on our ability to develop and improve our capacity to study the issues together and take decisions, both in the traditional areas of external relations, such as the common commercial policy, and in the more novel area of the common foreign and security policy. The Commission will not relax its efforts.

The fourth priority: preparing the ground for the future

That is why the Commission wants to see an Intergovernmental Conference which sets itself ambitious targets and achieves results.

Which brings me to the future of the Union, the **fourth line of action** in our programme. It is time to start drafting the agenda for the year 2000.

The first step along the path to the future has to be a successful Intergovernmental Conference. Let it be clear both to the Member States and to the people generally that the Commission is not seeking to increase its own powers. It wants the coming reform to equip the Union with the actual means of defending its interests in the world and for its citizens to be able to sense and acknowledge the Union's contribution. That is the kind of institutional reform the Union needs! That is the kind of institutional reform the Commission is defending! It is high time we realized this and displayed a determination to bring it about.

This institutional reform had to happen in any case. Enlargement makes it even more vital. As far as the Commission is concerned, it is an essential condition for what follows. I cannot actually see how we can continue with unanimous voting in a Union with 20 or more members. Retaining the present highly-complicated procedures would also seriously paralyse the interplay between the institutions.

Then we come to enlargement. In 1997, the Commission will deliver its opinions on the applicant countries, but not until the Intergovernmental Conference is over. It will issue its opinions quite independently, in other words, without taking sides from the outset or showing any indulgence.

Work on drawing up the financial perspective for the period after 1999 will begin next year. This is a task closely linked to enlargement. In 1997 the Commission will submit a communication on the financial framework from 2000 onwards. Enlargement will have major effects on the Community's policies. The common agricultural policy and the structural policies are foremost in my mind. The Commission's communication will be based on a very detailed assessment of what that impact will be.

The year ahead will bear the heavy imprint of the important deadlines facing us as 2000 approaches:

the Intergovernmental Conference must come to a conclusion with ambitious results attained;

the Union will be embarking on the final round of preparations for the spring 1998 decision on the third stage of economic and monetary union;

and there will be the preparations for Agenda 2000 — enlargement and the financial package for the post-1999 period.

These deadlines must be addressed in a logical order and in a responsible manner. The Commission assumes its responsibilities, and I know that Parliament will do the same. The Member States must also shoulder their responsibilities.

Thank you.

**Resolution of the European Parliament:
extracts concerning the Commission's
work programme for 1997**

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

[...]

II. 1997 work programme:

9. Approves the main lines of the 1997 work programme;

10. Supports the Commission in its institutional role as a driving force of the Union and guarantor of the application of Community law;

11. Points out that the Commission is required to take action in response to requests for legislative proposals submitted by Parliament pursuant to Article 138b of the EC Treaty and calls on the Commission to put forward proposals as soon as possible in response to the requests which have been made to it (resolution of 4 May 1994 on fire safety in hotels;¹ resolution of 20 April 1994 on preventing and remedying environmental damage;² above-mentioned resolution of 17 April 1996 on a European health card);

12. Takes the view that the number of requests for the urgent procedure by the Council (15 in 1996) and the Commission (six in 1996) could be reduced further by means of better planning, thereby enabling Parliament to give the proposals the detailed consideration required;

13. Sets its political priorities and calls for the legislative programme to be implemented and expanded by incorporating the following initiatives and proposals;

Employment, growth and the strengthening of cohesion

14. Reaffirms that the fight against unemployment remains the over-riding political goal; underlines that an effective employment policy covers both macroeconomic and structural policies and that the interaction between the two is of the utmost importance; this approach should be reflected also in a stronger employment chapter within the Broad Economic Guidelines and in the Joint Employment Report;

15. Stresses that, in terms of macroeconomic policy, a balanced policy mix is essential between a less restrictive monetary policy and a fiscal policy which allows adequate levels of

public investment as well as the implementation of employment-creating and environment-protecting economic activities;

16. Believes that structural policies include both those policies which are conducive to the competitiveness of EU industry — regional, research, transport, environment, industrial and single market — and policies aimed at creating an effective labour market and real job opportunities — in particular through an enhanced system of education and lifelong learning, within the framework of strengthening the European model of society;

17. Urges the Council and the Commission to cooperate actively to ensure the implementation of the territorial pacts on employment;

18. Calls for legislative proposals in the field of new forms of work, particularly teleworking and homeworking; calls for a study of the impact of these new forms of work on the distribution of tasks between men and women and on employment;

19. Points out that proposals on the European company can be put forward only when the rules governing the participation and co-determination rights of workers in companies with a European statute have been agreed;

20. Asks the Commission to make concrete proposals for a follow-up to the EP report on the future of social protection;

21. Asks the Commission to include in its White Paper on working time the requests made by Parliament in its resolution of 18 September 1996 on reduction and adaptation of working time;³

22. Calls on the Commission to present a legislative proposal on supplementary pensions for migrant workers within the framework of the follow-up to the High-Level Panel on free movement;

23. Asks the Commission to propose common indicators for the monitoring of the multiannual national employment programmes;

24. Calls on the Commission to devise a system for assessing and monitoring the impact of Community policies on cohesion policy in order to improve its effectiveness; asks furthermore that the Commission produce a study on

¹ OJ C 205, 25.7.1994, p. 163.

² OJ C 128, 9.5.1994, p. 165.

³ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 8.

the impact of EMU on the less-prosperous regions of the Union;

25. Urges the Commission to make specific proposals on the definitive VAT system, excise duties, taxes on capital and corporate taxation in order to achieve the objectives set out in the Dublin Summit Memorandum; asks that particular attention be paid in this context to taxation of SMEs; asks that the ad hoc standing committee on fiscal policy should give some consideration to assessing a fiscal code of conduct;

26. Calls on the Commission to forward an annual report to the European Parliament and to the Council examining the coordination of competition policy, industrial policy, internal market policy and trade policy; suggests too that the economic efficiency analyses already carried out by Commission departments should be annexed to communications or Green Papers covering these areas;

27. Calls on the Commission to present a study on the effect of a reduced VAT rate for labour-intensive services on employment;

28. Asks the Commission to complete legislation in the field of telecommunications and to present in a single coherent framework the different proposals for the information society;

29. Calls on the Commission to examine ways of ensuring that the European Parliament is fully involved in all preparations for EMU, in particular that sufficient time be allowed for Parliament to express its opinion on the convergence decision that will be the basis for the decision as to which Member States will move forward to monetary union; calls on the Commission to take the legislative measures to ensure that citizens are guaranteed legal security in terms of their contracts, savings and purchasing power once the single currency is introduced;

30. Calls on the Commission to produce a report on the financing of infrastructure investment in Europe, particularly in the context of the stability pact;

31. Is of the opinion that the revision of the financial perspective is urgently needed in order to enable the European Union to face its present and future challenges;

People's Europe

32. Urges the Commission to present as soon as possible its report on the provisions on citizen's rights as foreseen by Article 8e and that was due by the end of 1996;

33. Urges the Commission to use its right of initiative in the framework of justice and home affairs more systematically, and to transfer asylum and immigration policy, questions related to the external borders and to third-country nationals as well as questions related to drug addiction progressively into Community legislation;

34. Calls on the Council and the Commission to proceed with the adoption and the implementation respectively of the three directives for the facilitation of free movement of persons in the EU, taking due account of Parliament's amendments;

35. Calls on the Commission to combat 'child sex tourism', child pornography and the use of networks for paedophile purposes and to keep the interests of children uppermost in mind when taking legislative initiatives directly or indirectly affecting children;

36. Calls formally on the Commission to follow up Parliament's abovementioned request of 17 April 1996 for a European health card no later than 1 June 1997, pointing out that, if it fails to submit this proposal, Parliament will assess, in accordance with Rule 84 of its Rules of Procedure, whether it should uphold its constitutional prerogatives by bringing an action before the Court of Justice, pursuant to Article 175 of the EC Treaty, to have the infringement established;

27. Welcomes the Council initiative to set up an observatory on questions of racism, and awaits the Commission's draft directive on the fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism;

28. Regarding the fight against crime, calls on the Commission to speed up

the introduction of electronic devices against car theft,

the introduction of security measures for credit cards,

the revision of the directive on money laundering;

39. Calls on the Commission to put forward a legislative proposal dealing with bankruptcy of firms operating in several Member States;

40. Calls on the Commission to put forward general rules laying down the minimum conditions and the fundamental principles governing public access to EU documents;

41. Calls for a system of independent supervision for the protection of personal data by the institutions and bodies of the Union;

42. Calls for proposals enabling the Commission to suspend payments immediately when a Member State is mismanaging Union funds, to recover any amounts obtained illegally and, if necessary, to impose sanctions on the Member State;

43. Calls for a Commission decision undertaking to bring a case before the Court of Justice requesting it to impose financial sanctions when a Member State has not taken measures within a year to implement a Court judgment, especially in the areas of the single market and the environment (Article 171 of the EC Treaty);

Environment, research, energy, transport, agriculture

44. Asks the Commission to present a communication on the efforts undertaken to green the budget;

45. Calls on the Commission to put forward a proposal for a Directive on soil protection;

46. Calls on the Commission finally to present proposals to reduce the use of pesticides, as promised in the fifth Environmental Action Programme;

47. Reiterates its call for the Commission to put forward the requisite proposals concerning the ecolabel for certain industrial products and the certification of agricultural and food products and to follow up Parliament's proposals on waste management in its resolution of 14 November 1996 on the communication from the Commission on the review of the Community strategy for waste management and the draft Council resolution on waste policy (COM(96) 0399 — C4-0453/96);¹

48. Calls on the Commission to submit a framework programme with a clear legal basis

for the utilization of renewable energy sources;

49. Urges the Commission to organize a regional energy conference together with the G7, EBRD, WANO, EIB, the World Bank, the IMF and energy NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe with a view to establishing clearly for each of those countries how the energy policy can best be supported;

50. Asks the Commission to place even more emphasis on the aspects of safety in all modes of transport, and especially in the light of recent incidents and defects;

51. Asks for the development of an integrated rural policy of the Union, which should take particular account of the need for convergent development between the European Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe;

52. Calls on the Commission to pursue a balanced policy on the conservation of fish stocks in conjunction with socially acceptable conversion measures in the sectors affected by restructuring, particularly with a view to the fourth multiannual guidance programme; urges, in addition, that the new fisheries agreements with the ACP States should take greater account of development policy factors;

53. Asks the Commission to extend the SLIM project in the area of legislation to other areas such as environment policy, health and safety at the workplace and public contracts;

Strengthening the Union's role in the world

54. Calls on the Commission to make more active use of its right of initiative and to submit to the Council proposals for joint actions as provided for in Article J.8.(3) of the EU Treaty; calls on the Commission to ensure the consistency of measures in the commercial, economic and development spheres;

55. Calls on the Commission to implement the measures provided for under the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, including the negotiation of the various association agreements, the implementation of the MEDA programme and support for the Middle East peace process;

56. Calls on the Commission to incorporate into agreements between the European Union and third countries provisions dealing with

¹ Minutes of that Sitting, Part II, Item 2.

human rights and democracy which must be monitored and which give rise to sanctions if breached once the agreement has entered into force;

57. Calls on the Commission to publish an annual communication on compliance with the human rights and democracy clause in third countries with which the Community has concluded agreements;

58. Calls on the Commission to continue its efforts to foster reconstruction in the former Yugoslavia;

59. Calls on the Commission to establish the humanitarian observatory for crisis analysis and to make provision for preventive measures to assist the Commission and Council in the implementation of the CFSP;

* * *

60. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the European Council, the Council, the national parliaments, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

European Commission

The Commission's work programme for 1997

Presentation to the European Parliament by President Jacques Santer

Resolution of the European Parliament on the Commission's work programme for 1997

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