

Plenary Resolution 6-00043

presented by

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Text of

Tuesday 13 July 2010, Session No. 351

The Chamber of Deputies of Italy,

whereas consideration both of the European Commission's Work Programme for 2010 and of the programme of the Council Presidencies of Spain, Belgium and Hungary did not begin until June 2010 owing to the delay by the European Commission in providing our Parliament with Italian language translations of the annexes to the Work Programme;

whereas the Work Programme was adopted by the European Commission on 31 March 2010, and, on 13 April 2010, only the main body of the text was transmitted to the Italian Parliament; not until 20 May 2010 were Italian translations transmitted also of the annexes, even though they form an integral part of the document and, given that they refer to specific initiatives that the Commission intends to undertake, are of utmost importance for the purposes of parliamentary consideration. This serious delay by the European Commission in translating and forwarding the annexes was prejudicial to the timeliness and therefore also the effectiveness of the response of our Parliament, and is symptomatic of the scant attention paid by the Commission towards "non-working" languages;

More generally, we, the signatories of the present policy-setting document, are of the opinion that a large and growing number of contraventions have taken place in respect of the regulations for multilingualism in European Institutions, also in consequence of the introduction of French, English and German as the "working languages" of some Institutions and bodies of the European Union;

This three-language arrangement seems wholly untenable; it also raises questions of legitimacy and is effectively discriminatory, and is the source of unnecessary translation and interpretation costs;

It is to be hoped that the Italian Government and the Italian members of EU Institutions and Organs will make every effort to counter all attempted contraventions of language rules;

whereas the amendments recently made to Article 15 of Law 11 of 2005 make it possible to hold a European Session, to be done in the early months of each year, by combining the examination of the European Union's legislative

programme and other EU planning instruments with the examination of the annual planning report on Italy's participation in the European Union;

whereas the early warning procedure for subsidiarity compliance is of particular importance and ensures that the deliberating bodies and legislative assemblies of Italian Regions are consulted about EU draft legislation that has a bearing on their areas of competence;

whereas although it is the first general planning instrument to be presented by the current Commission, the 2010 Work Programme contains no policy orientations relating to the full five-year tenure of the Commission, and therefore emerges as lacking in any reference framework for medium- or long-term strategies that might offer a remedy for the flaws in the current structure of the Union, and offers no vision of the model of Europe being sought;

whereas in respect of the debate in Europe concerning the strategies for overcoming the economic crisis, the Commission's Work Programme comes across as overdue and does not offer any clearer or more detailed policies for striking a balance between the budgetary rigour that some parties are demanding and the indispensable need to foster growth and employment, these being matters that it only timidly touches upon, or not at all;

whereas this lack of global vision confirms the political weakness of the Barroso Commission, which was also apparent in its timid response to the economic crisis, the Greek debt crisis and the crisis of the euro itself, which opened the way to an approach that was over-reliant on intergovernmental cooperation, as well as being excessively short-term in outlook;

whereas the Commission's Work Programme pays little too heed to the need for investment in tangible and intangible infrastructures, which are absent from the list of priority actions for the immediate future, and likewise overlooks the need for new economic policy instruments, such as the creation of European debt securities and the need for new ways of raising own funds to cover the Community budget;

whereas, notwithstanding the adoption of a packet of measures to safeguard financial stability, a currency union that is characterised by the persistent absence of a framework for the resolution of the crisis of heavily indebted member states and by feeble coordination of counter-cyclical fiscal policies is a union that remains incomplete and extremely vulnerable to internal and external crises. Economic integration must once again become the

powerhouse for the construction of Europe, and must lay the groundwork for a further move towards political union. Europe is at a crossroads. Either it opts to move decisively in the direction of deeper economic, social and political integration, which is also an essential prerequisite for its resuming its place on the world stage, or it risks political marginalisation and economic disintegration. For this reason, the protectionist propensity must be resisted, and a new phase of integration launched by the full and rapid exploitation of the opportunities afforded by the new Treaty;

whereas the establishment of economic governance for Europe is essential for the success of the EU 2020 Strategy and, more generally, for growth, development, competitiveness and employment. The Commission's proposals, set forth in the Communication of 30 June 2010, refer to the need for adjustments and additions to eliminate the mismatch that exists between the need for rigorous budgetary discipline and the continuing poor coordination of the policies for growth, employment and social inclusion;

whereas it is absolutely necessary that the European Union provides itself with sufficient resources to manage its own internal and external responsibilities, the quantity and quality of which were augmented by the Lisbon Treaty, and that it responds to its citizens' expectations concerning the process of European integration. In this respect, cohesion policy is an essential tool, as long as it is not treated simply as a mere means of wealth redistribution but is, rather, allowed to recover its purpose, which is to foster economic growth and social and territorial development, and close the development gap between the regions of the European Union;

whereas, with respect to immigration, the Programme lacks any long-term strategic vision, provides for no significant advances or legislative initiatives contributing to the formation of a common system of asylum law, and fails to address the question of the revision of the Dublin Convention, which effectively places the burden of processing asylum requests on countries such as Italy that, by virtue of their geographical location, are the easiest for migrants to reach. It is therefore necessary to work towards the rapid establishment of a European Asylum and Refugee Agency;

whereas, at a more general level, action has to be taken to ensure that many issues of highest relevance for our country are given priority among the planning tools that will be used to shape future European policies and legislation. The issues in question include, in particular: the definition of a common European immigration and asylum policy, the combating of

counterfeiting, the protection of the "made in Italy" brand, a common energy market and the valorisation of the Mediterranean dimension;

whereas expanding our country's capacity to use the cohesion and rural development funds made available by the European Union is of priority importance, and consideration should be given to the possibility of setting up a specific structure dedicated to this task, preferably as part of the Department for European Policies;

whereas the government must be reminded of its duty to discharge in full the commitments it made in Resolution No 6-00021 (sponsored by CENTEMERO *et al.*), which was approved unanimously by the Chamber of Deputies on 19 May 2009 following consideration of the Report on the participation of Italy in the EU in 2007, and in Resolution No. 6-00030 (CENTEMERO *et al.*) approved by the Chamber of Deputies on 22 September 2009, following consideration of the Report on the participation of Italy in the European Union in 2008;

whereas there is a need to pursue and reinforce the process aimed at progressively bringing the western Balkans closer to the European Union, which remains the only real solution that can bring stability and economic development to the region;

does hereby commit the Government to:

a) as regards the implementation of the EU's 2020 Strategy:

the timely preparation at a national level of effective and realistic measures for the achievement of the objectives set out in the Strategy, ensuring the involvement of all local authorities, regions and the two Houses of Parliament in accordance with Article 4-*ter* of Law 11 of 2005;

promoting, in particular, the measures set out in the flagship initiative, "An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs", with particular regard to initiatives for matching labour supply and demand, enhancing the capacity of the social partners to resolve disputes through social dialogue, and favouring the development of a European framework for capacities, skills and employment;

promoting, also in view of the clear predominance of public-sector over private-sector research, private investment in R&D through the more precisely

targeted use of structural funds and through the use of financial instruments that the EIB envisages for small businesses in particular;

enhancing social inclusion by supporting the development of an indicator of absolute poverty, to be based on an income threshold corresponding to the minimum necessary monthly cost of buying a given basket of goods and services, the aim of which is to provide a reckoning of the differences in living costs in the European Union;

promoting specific financial initiatives for the protection of those who are most susceptible to the risks posed by the global economic crisis, such as young people, women, the disabled, the over-50 unemployed, and to undertaking concrete measures to favour parity and reduce the male-female pay gap, which is one of the key objectives of the EU 2020 strategy;

b) *with reference to economic governance and the Lisbon Strategy:*

working towards the construction of a "European economic government" that is suited to dealing with the challenges posed by the economic crisis. The task also entails the creation of a European Monetary Fund that, in addition to managing emergencies, defending the euro and guaranteeing market stability, shall also seek to promote a social and sustainable Union by offering support for the real economy and revamping European growth, development, productivity, competitiveness, employment, research and innovation;

going beyond the proposals put forward by the Commission for mechanisms based on prevention, sanctions and rewards so that they refer not just to competition and budgetary objectives, but also to employment, labour and social policies;

promoting the definition of reliable indicators for macro-economic surveillance aimed at monitoring, especially, the rigorous enforcement of the 2020 Strategy;

ensuring compliance with the rules of conditionality governing the use of European resources by those Member States under investigation for excessive deficits, so that no discrimination occurs among EU member states. The resources in question shall refer to all funds and programmes financed by Europe, not just structural funds and agricultural subsidies;

considering ways of achieving tighter coordination among the Eurozone countries not only by making use of the specific instruments that already exist for this purpose, but also by resorting to enhanced cooperation;

promoting the effective coordination of European employment policies, and taking steps to encourage the introduction of precise benchmarks with which each country must comply in order to prevent instances of social dumping, and introducing measures to broaden participation in the labour market in the manner put forward by Commissioner Mario Monti in the Report, "A New Strategy for the Single Market" presented on 10 May last to the President of the European Commission;

c) *with reference to the revision of the European budget:*

the timely transmission to the Houses of Parliament of detailed information and figures relating to the financial impact on Italy of the various proposals for the reform of the expenditure and revenue flows of the European Union;

taking steps to ensure that during the current period of reflection and the later negotiations for the preparation of a multi-annual post-2013 Financial Framework of the European Union, the following objectives are borne in mind:
1) clearly and transparently define the relationship of the EU's policy priorities with its spending, and reaffirm the principle of solidarity and parity among Member States;

2) secure an amount of resources that is considerably higher than that envisaged in the Financial Framework for 2007-2013 by focusing on measures to support new priorities and strategic challenges, with particular regard to competitiveness, innovation, research, small businesses, the regulation of migratory flows and the management of illegal immigration, while maintaining funding for cohesion policies at least at the level currently envisaged in the Financial Framework 2007-2013;

3) set aside specific and adequate funds for very high value-added European projects and products, especially in the fields of healthcare, research and infrastructure;

4) extend co-financing to include new sectors such as, in particular, agriculture, so that the allocation of the EU's budget may produce a "leverage effect" and increase the total volume of resources available;

5) ensure, in any case, that under the post-2013 Financial Framework Italy will benefit proportionately to its net contribution to the EU budget;

6) foster greater recourse to new models for the financing of European public policies such as public-private partnerships, loans and credit guarantees from

the European Investment Bank (EIB), the European Investment Fund (EIF) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). By generating a significant leverage effect, these new financial sources can mobilise further public- and private-sector investment;

propose a closer examination of the benefits to be had from using European debt securities to finance, in particular, investments in European infrastructure and research;

promote greater synergies between the EU budget and domestic budgets of member states with a view to quantifying the amount of resources earmarked for each policy and objective and, in light of the reduced size of the European budget and the economic crisis, promote the use of these resources for common objectives;

d) *as regards cohesion policies:*

promoting, with reference to the implementation of the Operational Programmes for 2007-2013, an enhancement of the central and regional governments' capabilities in financial planning, cost management, expenditure and budget control;

taking steps to ensure that cohesion policy enshrines the following principles as priorities:

1) in line with the EU 2020 Strategy, concentrate available resources on a few objectives that can effectively generate growth and development such as infrastructure, innovation, research and support for small and medium businesses;

2) implement in full the territorial dimension of cohesion support as introduced by the Lisbon Treaty, and ensure that the next round of planning pays particular attention to rural areas, districts undergoing industrial transformation and regions that suffer serious and permanent natural or demographic disadvantages, including mountain areas and islands;

3) rethink the current distinction between "Convergence" and "Competitiveness" objectives and the consequent division of resources and territories;

4) simplify procedures and methods of budget planning and management by accelerating the procedures for the allocation of funds while, at the same time, introducing more rigorous controls both as regards accounting compliance and the ex-ante and ex-post efficiency of projects;

5) significantly increase the resources distributed through reward mechanisms, which favours those regions that achieve quality in their expenditure and excellence in their results;

e) as regards the internal market:

taking action to ensure that the recommendations contained in the report "A New Strategy for the Single Market" presented on 10 May 2010 by Professor Mario Monti at the behest of the European Commission are swiftly adopted to form an organic strategy that sets out concrete measures, including the presentation of appropriate legislative proposals;

encouraging, at a national and a European level, faster implementation of the principles and measures favouring small businesses as prescribed in the Small Business Act for Europe presented by the Commission in June 2008, including the adoption of specific rules for public contracts that take account of the particular characteristics and needs of SMEs;

taking action to strengthen the EU's instruments for the prevention and suppression of goods counterfeiting;

protecting consumers by promoting a law that guarantees transparency in labelling and the traceability of products by providing clear information about the sourcing and processing of products;

promoting sound statistical tools for product monitoring that, on the basis of tests and analyses made of samples collected from the distribution network through the entire territory of the EU, ensures that products comply with health and safety standards, with particular reference to products destined for human consumption or related to the food industry, as well as clothing, materials used in construction and human dwellings, and the transport and automotive sector;

f) as regards the financial markets:

taking steps to ensure the rapid approval of legislative proposals for the reform of European financial supervision and the immediate establishment thereafter of the three European supervisory authorities as envisaged in the proposals. In any case, a medium-term review would need to be made of the supervision framework to test its continuing adequacy against developments in the markets and financial instruments;

g) as regards taxation policies:

taking steps, with reference also to the recommendation made in Professor Monti's report, to ensure some measure of coordination of national tax systems lest, given the current global crisis, competitive taxation among member states degenerates into destructive behaviour, with negative repercussions for the overall competitiveness of the European economy and its budget policies;

in furtherance of the foregoing, supporting European Commission initiatives aimed at forming a common consolidated base rate of taxation on businesses, and giving consideration to the possibility of setting common minimum rates of corporate income tax;

promoting the rationalisation of VAT rules by the progressive elimination of exemptions granted to individual Member States and the compilation of a single list of goods and services eligible for reduced VAT rates;

h) as regards energy policy and combating climate change:

giving fresh impetus to global action against climate change, especially in light of the disappointing outcome of the Copenhagen Summit, so that the theme of the "green economy" may once again take centre stage to the benefit of a Europe at the forefront of the new sustainable economy, which has absolute priority in the European strategy to foster growth and development, and counter the economic crisis by means of a "climate-energy package", and is also congruent with "Resource efficient Europe", one of the European Commission's flagship initiatives;

intervening in favour of the launch of the examination of the third "energy package", and, within the framework of the EU 2020 Strategy, setting binding commitments aimed at fostering the development of an authentic common European energy policy, for which real and courageous ambition still seems to be lacking;

adopting measures aimed at nurturing a new environmentally sustainable economy to create fresh opportunities for growth and "green" jobs, and at supporting the reconversion of the system of production to environmental ends, saving on energy, developing renewable energy (to be the fulcrum of a new energy policy that will reduce our dependence on energy imported from abroad and our use of high-polluting fossil fuels), while maintaining the

indispensable and already existing instruments for the fulfilment of the target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020;

j) as regards the common agricultural policy:

recognising, with reference to the initiatives mooted in the "Exit the Crisis" programmes of European Institutions, that the agriculture and fisheries sectors, in which alarming situations of real poverty are emerging, are areas that require extraordinary and urgent support;

taking action to ensure the application of the mechanism of automatic decommitment pursuant to Article 29 of EC regulation 1290/2005 does not imply the loss of significant appropriations from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development allocated to Italy, and, in particular, giving consideration to the possibility of reaching an agreement with the European Commission to modify the operational programmes for 2007-2013 using the review procedures allowed for under European law, and, in view of the exceptional nature of the economic crisis, resubmit and elaborate on proposals for the temporary waiving of the automatic decommitment for the years up to 2009. The proposal is analogous to that made in relation of structural funds in Article 93 paragraph 2-*bis* of EC Regulation 1083/2006;

l) as regards the language rules of the European Union:

steadfastly opposing all attempts to contravene the language rules of the European Union or marginalise the Italian language and, where necessary, making use of all judicial instruments available for this purpose;

opposing, in particular, efforts to use only English, French and German for the functioning of the Institutions and bodies of the European Union, including at an administrative level, and in specific legislative act such as the proposal for the translation of the European patent;

supporting the use solely of English, in cases where there is a need to reduce costs and exalt the functional efficiency of the administrative structures of the Institutions and Organs of the European Union, since English is by far the most widespread vehicular language at both a European and a global level;

m) as regard intelligent lawmaking:

taking action to ensure that in implementing the initiatives it has planned as part of the Work Programme for 2010 the European Commission shall:

- 1) make impact assessments available in all the official languages of the EU, at least as far as the most important legislative initiatives are concerned;
- 2) systematically apprise Member states and, in particular, their national parliaments, of the planned review of the entire body of EU law which is intended to identify excessive costs, overlaps, omissions, incongruities and/or obsolete measures;
- 3) move rapidly towards the enforcement of the commitment to make it mandatory to carry out ex-post assessments of amendments made to important laws;
- 4) press ahead with the withdrawal of proposals that have become obsolete by carrying out a check-up of all those still pending;

n) as regards the democratic validity of the EU:

taking action in a European context for the rapid and complete legislative enactment of the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty on "Democratic Life", with particular reference to popular initiatives and dialogue with civil society and religious communities;

o) as regards the external activities of the European Union and its neighbourhood policy:

streamlining and rendering more efficient the European External Action Service (EEAS) by guaranteeing a fair balance between representation and responsibility, and by promoting cost economies and synergies between national diplomatic services and European institutions, while also strengthening the function of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy so that the EU may present a more united, coherent and incisive front, congruent with the policies set by the European Council and with the joint democratic control of the European Parliament and of national parliaments;

bolstering the series of initiatives for the implementation of the 12-point action plan for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, also by means of an increase in the percentage of development aid to bring our country into line with other donor states. The fulfilment of the Millennium Goals

is a priority both for the EU and for our country as we draw near the deadline of 2015;

supporting the rapid conclusion of the accession of Croatia, the ratification of the stabilisation and association agreement with Serbia to allow Belgrade to submit its membership application, and the start by next year of negotiations for the accession of Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro;

supporting, within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean, the creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Investment Bank to guarantee the availability of financial instruments that are consonant with the region's development potential;

p) as regards the linkage between Government and Parliament in the framing of policies for the European Union:

making sure a start is made on the forthcoming Report on the participation of Italy in the European Union, pursuant to Article 15 of Law 11 of 2005 as amended by the EU Act 2009.

(6-00043) signed by Pescante, Stucchi, Gozi, Buttiglione, Razzi, Formichella, Consiglio, Farinone and Gottardo.