

European Parliament resolution on Malta's application for membership of the European Union and the state of negotiations (5 September 2001)

Caption: On 5 September 2001, the European Parliament adopts a resolution on the Republic of Malta's application for accession to the European Union and on the state of negotiations.

Source: European Parliament resolution on Malta's application for membership of the European Union, and the state of negotiations (COM(2000) 708 - C5-0608/2000 - 1999/2029(COS)). [EN LIGNE]. [Strasbourg]: European Parliament, [20.05.2005]. A5-0262/2001. Disponible sur http://www3.europarl.eu.int/pv2/pv2?PRG=CALDOC&TPV=PROV&FILE=010905&TXTLST=1&POS=1&SDOCTA=19&Type_Doc=FIRST&LANGUE=EN.

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European Parliament resolution on Malta's application for membership of the European Union and the state of negotiations (5 September 2001)

(COM(2000) 708 - C5-0608/2000 - 1999/2029(COS))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the application of Malta for membership of the European Union submitted in July 1990 and reactivated on 10 September 1998, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union,
- having regard to the 2000 Regular Report from the Commission on Malta's progress towards accession (COM(2000) 708 - C5-0608/2000),
- having regard to the Enlargement Strategy Paper on progress towards accession by each of the candidate countries, presented by the Commission (COM(2000) 700),
- having regard to the decisions taken by the European Council, notably in Copenhagen (21 and 22 June 1993), Helsinki (10 and 11 December 1999), Nice (7-9 December 2000) and Gothenburg (15 and 16 June 2001),
- having regard to the Accession Partnership for Malta concluded in 1999,
- having regard to its resolution of 4 October 2000 on Malta's application for membership of the European Union, and the state of negotiations (COM(1999) 508 - C5-0031/2000 - 1999/2029(COS))⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to Rule 47(1) of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy and the opinions of the other committees concerned (A5-0262/2001),

A. whereas the Maltese authorities are seeking to complete negotiations by 31 December 2002, in the expectation that all chapters will have been opened by the end of 2001,

B. whereas the Nice European Council declared its hope that the citizens of the new Member States would be able to take part in the next elections to the European Parliament in 2004,

Political criteria

1. Welcomes the fact that constitutional stability is assured in Malta, that the rules of democracy are being followed and that Malta is thus continuing to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria;
2. Notes with regret that the government and parliamentary opposition hold divergent views on Malta's accession to the European Union, and supports all the efforts by the various European institutions to enter into a constructive dialogue with all constitutional organisations and social strata in Malta, so as to safeguard the continuity of the accession process;

Economic criteria

3. Considers that Malta is a functioning market economy, and should be able to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union provided that it takes the appropriate measures, in particular by continued industrial restructuring;
4. Urges Malta to take further decisive measures to cut its budget deficit and government debt, whilst safeguarding the social dimension, and in this connection welcomes the measures already undertaken;

5. Urges the Maltese authorities to prepare legislation to implement fully the provisions of the Erica 1 and 2 packages, including the installation of Voyage Data Recorders on Maltese vessels, and to ensure that resources are available for effective Port State Control inspection and the monitoring and control of vessels;
6. Insists that the Commission continue to make clear to the Maltese authorities that full and effective implementation of the Community acquis, particularly in the area of maritime transport, is a prerequisite for membership, and urges the Community institutions to provide adequate technical assistance to ensure that the acquis is adopted as swiftly as possible;

Transposition of the acquis communautaire

7. Urges Malta to continue to pursue an environmental policy commensurate with its level of development in economic and civil society terms and, in particular, to adopt horizontal regulations on environmental impact assessment;
8. Calls on the Maltese government to adopt strategies for integrating minorities, to recognise their legitimate rights and, in particular, to introduce legislation against discrimination pursuant to Article 13 of the EC Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
9. Welcomes, in this connection, the adoption of the new Environmental Protection Act as a major step forward, but points out that the short-term priorities of the Accession Partnership with regard to waste and air and water quality need to be transposed speedily;
10. Regrets, in this respect, the lack of implementation of the previous Environmental Protection Act adopted in 1991 which could have paved the way for a speedier transposition of the Community acquis;
11. Calls not only for formal transposition but also for proper application of the EU acquis as regards nature protection, with particular emphasis on the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives;
12. Supports Malta in all its efforts to stem the rising levels of waste by banning the use of plastic bottles by maintaining its existing beverage container packaging system, as experience has shown that re-use is the best means for protecting Malta's fragile environment; welcomes, to this end, an eventual ban on non-returnable beverage containers;
13. Urges Malta to press on with agricultural reforms, in continuous consultation with farmer associations and, in particular, to put forward an analysis of the development opportunities for Maltese agriculture opened up by EU aid for rural areas;
14. Notes with concern that Malta has made little progress in establishing the administrative structures necessary for implementation of the common agricultural policy;
15. Draws attention to the fact that, in the phytosanitary area, the relevant provisions of the acquis still have to be incorporated and points out that the ability to deal with new phytosanitary aspects still has to be developed; welcomes the fact, however, that a veterinary medicine monitoring programme has been submitted and a number of testing standards brought into line with EU requirements; points out that arrangements for the disposal of waste material from slaughtered animals are not yet in line with the Community acquis;
16. Points out that, within quality policy, Community-compatible quality designations for the various agricultural products still have to be developed;
17. Calls for the negotiation of adequate quotas for Maltese fishermen as regards tuna and other fish and for severe limitations on the use of purse seine nets in the area, since these severely deplete fish stocks and are causing great damage to the marine flora and fauna and to bio-diversity in the Mediterranean;

18. Hopes that Malta will be able to present its negotiating position on the agriculture chapter as soon as possible;
19. Notes that, from the EU's point of view, the question of free movement of persons and workers is not really a problem, given the limited number of inhabitants, but that, in view of its geographical position, Malta's reservations should be taken into account; notes further, that Malta has expressed the need for a safeguard mechanism to be adopted on the freedom of movement of workers taking into consideration the disruption of the labour market in Malta in the event of a high inflow of workers following accession;
20. Reminds Malta that regional policy constitutes one of the great opportunities for Malta's economic development, and that it can, in particular, smooth out any transitional difficulties in the process of economic adjustment, provided that the legislative framework and administrative structures enable the funding in this area to be used to the full;
21. Welcomes, in this context, the completed adjustment of statistical methods to those of the European Union, which now enables Malta to determine the scale of post-accession structural aid which will be due;
22. Calls on the Commission, not least in the light of the above, to ensure that Malta receives full financial and technical support for modernising its public administration, including the financial instruments that have not been accessible to Mediterranean applicants to date;
23. Welcomes the fact that there is already a considerable degree of harmonisation in many areas relating to justice and home affairs, and notes that Malta will shortly be introducing amendments to its existing Money Laundering Act which will provide for the setting up of a Financial Intelligence Unit;
24. Acknowledges the Ombudsman's achievements in tackling corruption, but also expects the effectiveness of the Standing Committee on Corruption to be stepped up;
25. Notes that Malta's Parliament is currently discussing amendments to its criminal code, which will be adopted by the 4th quarter of 2001. These amendments will enable Malta to accede to the Council of Europe's Criminal Law Convention on Corruption, and will also enable Malta to ratify the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions.
26. Notes the efforts made by Malta to strengthen the system of control of public finances and the independence of the internal audit function;
27. With a view to control of own resources, insists that Malta modify its VAT legislation rapidly;
28. Would like to have information on Malta's capacity, in terms of financial management and control, to take on the decentralised implementation of pre-accession aid and calls for Malta to take urgent and substantial measures still necessary to set up appropriate management structures for EU aid;
29. Welcomes the fact that Malta has taken the first steps to monitor State aid;
30. Welcomes the structural measures that Malta is taking with regard to maritime transport and shipbuilding; calls on the Commission and the Member States to demonstrate flexibility in this area, so as not to damage this structurally important economic sector by setting transition periods for State aid which are too short;
31. Suggests that, in its preparatory strategy, Malta should focus particularly on EU funding for the promotion of small and medium-sized firms, since in view of Malta's special economic structure, this might provide the key to economic success within the European Union; welcomes, in this connection, the work of the Institute for the Promotion of Small Enterprises (IPSE);
32. Welcomes the fact that Malta has made great progress in the field of education policy; welcomes, in

particular, the fact that Malta has entered into agreements with the European Union with the result that Malta is now participating in the European Union's education, training and youth programmes;

33. Welcomes the progress made by Malta with the Community acquis in social matters and the proposed measures on health and safety and social protection;

34. Urges the Maltese legislature to commit itself, with a view to accession, both to transposing Community social and employment law and to expanding the government departments responsible;

35. Considers that harmonisation with the Community acquis concerning equal opportunities for men and women is an essential condition of Malta's accession to the EU since it is effectively a human rights issue, and that full implementation of the Community acquis requires the establishment and consolidation of institutions and administrative structures together with the formulation of specific policies in that area;

36. Welcomes the fact that Malta is aligning its foreign policy with the European Union's joint declarations and positions in the context of the CFSP;

37. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the parliaments of the Member States and the government and parliament of Malta.

(1) OJ C 178, 22.6.2001, p. 158.