

COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

Date: Thursday, 9 March 2000

Time: 9.30 am

Venue: Committee Room 1

Title: The European Commission's Strategic Aims for 2000 - 2005 and 2000 work programme.

This paper has been submitted by Catherine Eva, Head of the European Commission's Representation in Wales, for the information of Committee Members.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2000-2005

The Commission has agreed a key policy document outlining the strategic objectives that will guide its work over the next five years. It argues that the need for Europe has never been greater: democracy needs strengthening within the EU to reassure those who fear its resilience can no longer be taken for granted; instability beyond the EU is compelling it to act decisively in foreign affairs; globalisation is changing the way we communicate and do business, but many people feel disenfranchised; meanwhile people's daily lives are compounded by concerns over the food they eat or the air they breathe. More than ever before, collective problems required united responses, but at a time when public faith in the EU is at a low ebb.

The draft Communication on strategic guidelines for 2000-2005 proposes to focus Commission action on four strategic objectives:

- working towards the stabilisation of the continent and strengthening the Union's voice on the international stage, notably through its enlargement strategy and a genuine policy of good neighbourliness.
- promoting a new economic agenda, destined on the one hand to modernise the economy to seize the opportunities of globalisation and the emergence of a new economy, and on the other, to make Europe more equitable and inclusive and ensure it shows greater solidarity.

- responding better to European citizens' needs and expectations, notably in terms of respect for their rights, food quality and safety and the preservation of a shared environmental heritage.
- designing new forms of governance to satisfy citizens' legitimate expectations and to ensure Europe can offer a collective response to global challenges.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S WORK PROGRAMME 2000

The work programme sets out in detail the Commission's programme for the year 2000. There are no major surprises in the identification of four central issues which will be taken to transform the strategic objectives for the next five years into reality.

- Promoting new forms of European governance
- A stable Europe with a stronger voice in the world
- A new economic and social agenda
- A higher quality of life for all

It is accompanied by an indicative list setting out the legislative and policy initiatives currently foreseen for this year.

For more information on:

The Commission's Work Programme for 2000 contact:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/off/work/2000/index_en.htm

The Commission's Strategic Objectives for 2000-2005 contact:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/off/work/2000-2005/index_en.htm

Both documents will be accessible from the Commission's 'Work Programmes/Action Plans/Guidelines' page:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/off/work/index_en.htm