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Enlargement

WEEKLY NEWS

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Welcome to Enlargement Weekly. This weekly bulletin provides an overview of where European Union enlargement has got to, who's doing what in the EU, in the acceding states and the candidate countries, and how the main challenges are being met.

#### SEARCHING FOR RESEARCHERS FROM FUTURE MEMBER STATES

Integrating researchers from the future member states more closely into EU research activities was at the centre of discussions when European Research Commissioner Philippe Busquin met ministers and senior officials from the acceding and candidate countries in Brussels last week. The talks focused particularly on participation in the EU's Sixth Framework Programme for research 2002-2006 - known familiarly as FP6.

The Commission has recently published the response to the first calls for proposals under FP6, and the data available shows that the participation of acceding/candidate countries could be improved. Out of more than 100,000 applications, only 13,000 are from acceding/candidate countries - less than 13%. The corresponding figure for member states is 19%. And only 1,500 organisations from the future member states have been selected for funding, mostly in nano-technology, information society, energy and transport projects. The lowest success rate was in aeronautics and space - just 1.3%.

"Since the very beginning of the Sixth framework programme, acceding and candidate countries have participated in EU research schemes on an equal footing with EU member states", said Commissioner Busquin. "The objective is to ensure the further integration of these countries in the European Research Area. As we can all benefit from the high-level scientific potential these countries have in many areas, we must ensure their participation in the Framework Programme reflects their real potential. There is still scope for improvement, and I am confident research players in EU Member States, and in the acceding and candidate countries alike, will make an additional effort to meet this goal."

FP6 is the Union's main instrument for the funding of research in Europe. It encourages closer links between researchers, the pooling of resources, and the bringing together of research teams in different countries. This is seen by the EU as essential if the Union and acceding/candidate countries are to compete, both scientifically and economically, in the global marketplace.

All acceding and candidate countries are associated to the EU Framework

Programme and enjoy the same rights and obligations as the member states. Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary Latvia, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia are also linked to the Euratom Framework Programme. Acceding and candidate countries contribute to, and share, FP6's €20 billion budget with the EU's existing member states.

Anticipating the difficulties that have limited their participation in the Fifth Framework Programme (which ran from 1998 to 2002), a special call for supporting actions was published in April, with a budget of €13 million. These actions are aimed at stimulating, encouraging and facilitating participation in the activities of the priority thematic areas. 201 proposals from all acceding and candidate countries were received before the June closing date. Evaluations took place in September and the selection procedure will be completed shortly. Activities to be supported include organisation of conferences and information days, networking of national contact points, setting up of databases, and initiatives to promote the participation of smaller firms. Further measures are also in hand to improve the flow of information on FP6 to the future member states, and a conference on the participation of acceding and countries in FP6 will take place in Bucharest on 12-13 February 2004.

PARTICIPATION IN FP6 SUBMITTED PROPOSALS	ACCEDING & CANDIDATES		ALL COUNTRIES	
	Proposals	Participants	Proposals	Participants
<b>6th Framework Programme, all activity areas</b>	<b>4.620</b>	<b>13.449</b>	<b>11.600</b>	<b>106.121</b>
<b>Integrating and strengthening the ERA</b>	<b>3.805</b>	<b>11.726</b>	<b>6.334</b>	<b>91.459</b>
Focusing and integrating Community research	3.786	11.674	6.334	91.459
1. Life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health	285	771	541	8.331
a. Advanced genomics and its applications for health	0	0	0	0
b. Combating major diseases	0	0	0	0
Joint call (Thematic priorities 1a,1b)	285	771	541	8.331
2. Information society technologies	822	2.262	1.584	21.480
3. Nano-technologies and nano-sciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials and new production processes and devices	753	2.927	1.017	21.960
4. Aeronautics and space	81	173	180	2.605
5. Food quality and safety	164	753	245	4.312
6. Sustainable development, global				

change and ecosystems	164	753	245	4.312
a. Sustainable energy systems	179	563	279	3.980
b. Sustainable surface transport	66	224	110	1.707
c. Global change and ecosystems	135	475	189	3.503
7. Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society	215	669	273	3.370
Joint call (Thematic priorities 2,3)	78	276	97	2.520
Joint call (Thematic priorities 4,6a,6b)	115	345	186	2.637
Policy support and anticipating scientific and technological needs	204	413	402	3.286
a. Policy-oriented research	126	251	213	2.149
b. Research to explore new and emerging scientific and technological problems and opportunities	78	162	189	1.137
Horizontal research activities involving SMEs	492	1.198	845	8.946
Specific measures in support of international co-operation	197	625	313	2.397
Support for the co-ordination of activities	19	52	73	425
Support for the coherent development of research & innovation policies	0	0	0	0
<b>Structuring the ERA</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>1.590</b>	<b>5.221</b>	<b>13.959</b>
Research and innovation	130	440	212	1.600
Human resources and mobility	554	819	4.721	9.623
Research infrastructures	59	233	170	1.937
Science and society	41	98	118	799
<b>Euratom</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>699</b>
1. Controlled thermonuclear fusion	0	0	0	0
2. Management of radioactive waste	0	0	0	0
3. Radiation protection	0	0	0	0
Joint call (Thematic priorities 2,3)	29	130	36	670
Other activities in the				

field of nuclear technologies and safety	2	3	5	29
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### **POLAND GETS LAST-MINUTE ADVICE FROM EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE**

The EU-Poland joint parliamentary committee in Brussels last week attracted top-line speakers, including European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen, and Poland's European affairs minister Danuta Hübner and under-secretary of state Jaroslaw Pietras. It reinforced the view that the new member states will add new perspectives to the process of European integration, with a positive impact on the development and cohesion of the European Union. A sentence in the formal conclusions "encourages Poland and the other central and eastern European Countries to take their natural place as the future EU linkage in creating good neighbour relations".

It also backed the idea of a new EU policy towards the neighbouring countries in the east. It welcomed the decision by the Commission to set up a Wider Europe Task Force and the proposals for Neighbourhood Programmes to improve the co-ordination of cross-border and regional co-operation instruments in 2004-2006, and to introduce a new financing instrument from 2007 to strengthen the EU's "New Neighbourhood" initiative. The conclusions underlined "the importance of integrating the concept of a wider Europe in the larger framework of the European Union's external relations".

In more specific terms, the joint parliamentary committee welcomed "the remarkable progress made by Poland in its preparations for EU membership", but urged a strengthening of administrative capacity to ensure the successful management of the Structural and Cohesion Funds available to the new member states from next year. "Considerable progress has been made to ensure the sound and effective management of the Funds, but much remains to be done", it pointed out, with a reminder that the acceding states will benefit from 1 January 2004 only if the necessary legislation has been aligned and fully transposed by 31 December 2003.

"Challenges remain" in fiscal adjustment and in restructuring and reduction of public expenditure, the committee pointed out, and also underlined the Commission judgement that "progress in restructuring heavy industries, energy distribution and agriculture has been modest since last year and that considerable efforts are still needed". Efforts are also still needed to improve the efficiency and transparency of the judiciary, it said, emphasising that "the fight against corruption should continue to receive high priority, particularly with a view to implementing the anti-corruption strategy".

And it also recalled the issues which have been identified as causing "serious concern", and where immediate and decisive action is needed - in agriculture, fisheries, and free movement of persons.

On the Inter-Governmental Conference to agree a new Treaty, the joint parliamentary committee expressed the hope "that it will be able to conclude its work as early as possible with a view to the Constitutional Treaty being signed on a date which allows the citizens to know the text of the Treaty before the elections to the European Parliament".

### **SOLANA ON POST-ENLARGEMENT SECURITY PROSPECTS**

"As the EU grows to encompass 25 countries with some 450 million inhabitants producing one quarter of the world's GDP, we have a duty to assume our responsibilities for security - to our own citizens, to our neighbours and, more widely, for global security", said Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, in Brussels

last week.

"We could, in theory, walk away from these responsibilities - but we could not escape the consequences of doing so. But I am convinced that the same reasons that give us responsibilities - our size and interests, our history and values - also equip us to take responsibilities", he went on.

"The world we live in has been dramatically changed in little more than a decade", said Solana. "The geo-strategic scene has been transformed. The process we describe as 'globalisation' has facilitated the easy movement of people, goods and ideas, but also of grievances, criminality and weapons. The Union has not stood impassive as the world around it changes". He viewed the imminent enlargement of the Union as "a response to the contemporary challenges, reinforcing political stability and economic security on our own continent."

The EU will also have to look beyond its new borders, Solana insisted. "Enlargement will transform the eastern border of the Union, which will be to a great part formed by the Polish border with Belarus and the Ukraine. This is a historic step for the entire European continent and presents a unique opportunity to strengthen co-operation with its neighbours to the east", he said. "Our task is to promote an arc of well-governed states in our neighbourhood with whom we can enjoy close and co-operative relations, creating a circle of good governance on the perimeter of the Mediterranean to the Caucasus", he remarked - adding, in the light of recent events there "Countries such as Georgia are neither remote nor distant."

## **FOCUS ON SLOVAKIA**

Continuing ENLARGEMENT WEEKLY's easy-to-read snapshots of the European Commission's assessment of the acceding states in its monitoring reports earlier this month, we look this week at Slovakia.

### ***economic context***

Macroeconomic performance has been improving considerably, but some significant imbalances remain. Reform has impetus, including in public finance, and the restrictive fiscal policy stance is helping narrow the high current account deficit. However, many vital measures still need to be defined and implemented. High unemployment is being tackled, and financial sector supervision is improving, but safeguards against stability risks are needed for the expanding financial sector. And more vigorous efforts are needed to improve the legal framework for a market economy.

### ***administrative and judicial capacity***

The conditions are in place for the implementation of the acquis by the public administration and judiciary, but further improvements are still needed. More staff and a long-term strategy for training are needed in sectors dealing with European integration, and the transfer of functions and fiscal decentralisation should go hand in hand in the decentralisation of the public administration. Stronger administrative capacities and greater financial independence are needed for the judicial council. The duration of court proceedings in civil and commercial cases needs shortening, and judicial training needs improving. And the fight against corruption should continue to receive high priority, with strict enforcement of existing rules, and with new measures to cover conflict of interests, financing of political parties and lobbying.

### ***meeting EU rules***

A high level of alignment with the EU acquis has been reached, and Slovakia is expected to be in a position to implement the acquis as required in most policy areas by the date of accession. But it needs to make enhanced efforts

to complete preparations in a number of areas, notably:

- in free movement of goods, old approach legislation and non-harmonised areas;
- in free movement of persons, mutual recognition of professional qualifications; in free movement of services, insurance, information society services, protection of personal data, right of establishment and the freedom to provide non-financial services;
- protection of intellectual and industrial property rights in company law;
- in agriculture, trade mechanisms, common market organisations for sugar, wine, and beefmeat, the veterinary control system, rules on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and animal by-products, and controls on maximum residue limits for pesticides;
- in road transport;
- in taxation, VAT and excise duties;
- in social policy and employment, the European Social Fund, and anti-discrimination;
- alignment in postal services and telecommunications;
- in environment, industrial pollution;
- market surveillance and nonsafety-related measures in consumer and health protection;
- in justice and home affairs, the Schengen Action Plan, data protection, visa policy, external borders, asylum and the fight against fraud and corruption; in external relations, bilateral agreements with third countries;
- control over structural action expenditure and protection of EU financial interests in the area of financial control.

#### ***urgent action***

Slovakia must take "immediate and decisive action" to be ready by the date of accession in:

- competition policy field, on fulfilment of the Accession Treaty conditions for the transitional arrangement in the steel sector;
- agriculture, on setting up the Paying Agency, implementing the Integrated Administration and Control System, and upgrading public health protection in agri-food establishments.

## **Enlargement news in brief**

### *Romania signs up on international crime fight*

Romania has put its name to an EU agreement on fighting international crime. The Romanian minister of administration and interior, Ioan Rus, and Europol Director, Jürgen Storbeck, signed a co-operation agreement in Bucharest last week. The agreement, negotiated with the EU over the last few months since May, when the EU Council of Justice and Home Affairs Ministers agreed in principle, provides for the exchange of information - including personal data - in the fields of drugs trafficking, illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, child pornography, terrorism and financial crime. The Romanian ministry of administration and interior was designated as the national contact point for Europol, and a Romanian liaison officer will be soon seconded to the Headquarters of Europol in The Hague. Romania will not join the EU before 2007, but the agreement enables Europol and the Romanian police to start now in establishing full operational co-operation in fighting organised criminal networks. "South Eastern Europe constitutes a transit area for mainly drugs, illegal immigration and trafficking of human beings towards the EU. Romania maintains a key geographical position and our stable co-operation with the Romanian law enforcement authorities is decisive for improving security in the area", said Storbeck at the signing ceremony. Europol has already signed similar co-operation agreements with other central and eastern states set to join the EU, as well as with Russia.

*Another improved border crossing for Poland*

A new road border crossing point was opened last week at the Polish-Belarusian border, in Kuznica Bialostocka. This is the second-largest crossing point on the border with Belarus, and has been entirely rebuilt after more than a year of closure. The construction has been cofinanced from the EU's Phare programmes with more than €9 million for infrastructure, and a tender for the purchase of X-ray equipment for trucks and luggage financed from Phare 2001 is being completed. The rationale for the investment is that upgrading and development of cross-border infrastructure along the future external border of the EU is vital to ensure compliance with EU standards in the field of border management, customs and veterinary controls - and was well to ease contacts between the enlarged EU and its new neighbours. Total Phare support for border infrastructure projects amounts to €90 million. The investments will increase the capacity of the border crossings, improve border safety and work conditions of border services and reduce waiting time at the border; they will also bring new jobs and promote economic activity and tourism within the communities on both sides of the border. On the border with Belarus, Phare also cofinances the modernisation of crossing points in Terespol/Kukuryki and Bobrowniki, and at the borders with Ukraine and Russia, it is supporting upgrading and access to the crossing points in Dorohusk, Hrebenne and Goldap. The construction of new crossing points is also cofinanced at the border with Ukraine in Kroschenko and with Russia at Grzechotki. Training and additional equipment are also provided to the border services (border guard, customs, veterinary and phyto-sanitary inspection). After accession, further upgrades of external border infrastructure and training will be supported by the EU's Schengen facility - of which Poland will receive some €280 million between 2004 and 2006.

*Training to help acceding states' companies meet the acquis*

A training programme to create a pool of experts to assist companies in the ten accession countries with the implementation of the EU acquis was run in Brussels last week by Eurochambres, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It is part of the association's accession programme for eastern Europe, funded under the EU's Phare programme of aid to central and eastern Europe. By the end of the year more than 70 people from central and eastern European chambers and experts in EU law will be trained in Brussels for their role as auditors and advisers for companies in their home countries, says Eurochambres. According to Arnaldo Abruzzini, its secretary general, the aim is to offer central European companies an external screening by experts on the spot. "As the participants are locally based, the companies will also benefit from their acquis-related knowledge in the long run", he said. The training is designed for sectors ranging from foodstuffs to machines and electrical equipment, and from chemicals and pharmaceuticals to construction and road transport. It also covers cross-cutting areas such as safety and health at the workplace, intellectual property rights, consumer protection and product liability. Once they have been trained, the participants will go back to their countries and conduct field visits based on a standard checklist to screen companies on their level of EU compliance. Following this diagnosis, local chambers of commerce and industry will offer services to the enterprises to help them to acquire the knowledge to implement the remaining parts of the acquis.

*Smaller firms in Baltics benefit from new funding*

The European Investment Bank is lending €30 million to Hansabank to finance small- and medium-scale projects promoted by smaller firms and municipalities in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Industry, services and tourism, investments in the field of environmental protection, energy savings, and health and education infrastructure are the principal targets for assistance. Hansabank will assess each project, assume the credit risk and set the loan conditions for the final beneficiary. Since 1990, the EIB has lent a total of €22 billion in central and eastern Europe to finance European integration projects, and almost €3 billion of this is being provided through this type of global loan.

Lending so far this year to the countries of the region exceeds €2.8 billion. The EIB's objective in central and eastern Europe is to prepare the future member states for EU membership and to integrate them into the single market. Its priorities include transport, human capital development, protection and upgrading of the natural and urban environment, and foreign direct investment.

#### *Fuelling the EU's enlargement*

Oil should soon start flowing through a new connection into the enlarged Europe from the Caspian and beyond. The "Odessa-Brody-Plock Oil Transportation Project" was given a boost last week when senior figures from the European Commission, Poland and Ukraine issued a formal statement declaring their support for the plan. The construction of the Odessa-Brody pipeline, which will have a capacity of 14.5 million tonnes a year, started in Ukraine in 1995, and is due to come on-stream early next year. An extension will carry the oil to Plock in Poland, creating a link to refineries there, and permitting oil exports from petroleum terminals in Poland and Germany. And while the extension is being built, a special rail link will carry the fuel in tankers. The pipeline will also supply refineries in Germany, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The joint statement issued by European Energy Commissioner Loyola de Palacio, Polish deputy prime minister Marek Pol, and Ukrainian deputy prime minister Vitalii Gaiduk recognised "the important step forwards made in the last months". It also urges private companies to join the joint venture that will build the Brody-Plock section. "The Odessa-Brody-Plock Oil Transportation Project is one of the infrastructure projects that could help to improve the security of supply of the EU and Ukraine and speed up the implementation of high-level environmental and technical standards for the transportation of oil," said Loyola de Palacio at the signature ceremony for the declaration. "The European Commission supports firmly this project".

#### *The EU supports small-scale joint initiatives between Turkey and Greece*

Four projects have been selected for funding under the first phase of a new EU programme for Turkish-Greek civic dialogue. They target cultural heritage, conflict resolution, arts, rural development, tourism and gender. Each project will last for a maximum of 12 months with a total support of €200,000. One aims to develop local awareness on architectural heritage in Crete, Greece and Cappadocia, in the wake of the exchange of populations in Turkey and Greece. Another is backing the creation of a permanent platform for Turkish and Greek non-governmental organisations active in the field of women's rights in Ankara and Ioannina. Elsewhere, conflict resolution and conflict management techniques are being fostered among university students, for them to acquire the necessary skills to be active participants in conflict resolution and citizenship and to develop a curriculum that will be used in universities in Turkey and Greece. And long-term co-operation is to be promoted between Komotini, Greece and Edirne, Turkey through setting up an institute for rural development, for research and cross-border initiatives in regional development.

### **Enlargement Mini-Briefs**

- The lower house of the French parliament ratified the EU Accession Treaty last week, by a large majority. The parliament's upper house, the Sénat, is due to vote on it on 10 December. So far Denmark, Germany and Spain have completed the ratification process which all member states must do before 1 May 2004 for accession to take place. The president of the French Parliament, Jean-Louis Debré, has meanwhile invited the presidents of the national parliaments of the new member states to a working session on 3 December.
- Agreement was reached last week on the EU's 2004 budget - its first budget for an enlarged EU. The European Parliament and the EU Council of Ministers settled their outstanding points of difference in a conciliation process, so now funding is secure for the additional

- expenditure to make enlargement work.
- The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development committed €1.97 billion for new loan and equity investments in central and eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in the nine months ended 30 September, compared with €2.53 billion in the same period last year. And based on the current pipeline of projects likely to be signed this year, the volume for 2003 as a whole is expected to be in line with the €3.9 billion level achieved in 2002.
  - A €600,000 EU project to bring additional professionalism to the Czech prison service came to its end last week. This 15-month twinning project had been running since September 2002. Its main goal was to train more than 300 staff in the Czech prison service through seminars with experts from the Netherlands and Germany, and through visits to EU member states.
  - The 2003 Phare national programme financial memorandum for Slovakia has been signed in Bratislava, setting out EU support for 33 projects worth approximately €57 million. All projects must be contracted by November 30, 2005 and implemented by November 30, 2006.
  - In its latest strategy for Bulgaria, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development says the country has achieved impressive macroeconomic stability over recent years, but challenges still loom, especially in improving the country's business climate and pushing forward large-scale privatisations to attract much-needed foreign direct investment.
  - The handful of future member states that remain in the other 2004 challenge - the EURO 2004 football championship - are going to have another fight on their hands there. Bulgaria, Latvia, and the Czech Republic have all made it to the 16 national teams which will take part in the finals in Portugal next summer. Latvia, qualifying for the first time ever, after its surprise victory over Turkey in the previous round of the competition, and the Czech Republic, are destined to play each other, since they are both in the same group - along with Germany and Netherlands. Bulgaria is initially matched against Denmark, Sweden and Italy. Meanwhile, EU applicant Croatia is in the group which also contains the current European champions, France, as well as the UK and Switzerland.

## Agenda

See also the new "Enlargement events calendar" on the DG Enlargement web site at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/events/calendar.htm>. This gives a run-down of public events related to the enlargement of the EU taking place in at current and future member states.

(note: now that acceding states take part in Council meetings and EP and ESC plenaries, these will from now on be listed in this calendar)

Date	Event
<b>December 2003</b>	
Monday 1 - Tuesday 2	■ 12th EU-Estonia Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania
Tuesday 2	■ European Commission President Romano Prodi meets Slovene premier minister Anton Rop, Brussels
	■ Liaison officers from the offices of national ombudsmen in the enlarged EU meet, Strasbourg
	■ EU Council of Ministers working group on enlargement meets, Brussels
	■ European Court of Justice hearing on the Panayotova case relating to the Association Agreements with Bulgaria, Poland and Slovakia and freedom of establishment, Luxembourg

- European Vice-President Neil Kinnock meets Hungarian premier minister Peter Medgyessy, Brussels
  - European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen talks about enlargement at the Belgian senate, Brussels
  - European Parliament committee on culture, youth, education, media and sport discusses the report on enlargement and cultural diversity by Euro-MP Christa Prets, Brussels
- Tuesday 2 -  
Wednesday 3  
Wednesday 3
- 51st EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, Romania
  - Slovak premier minister Mikulas Dzurinda holds bilateral meetings with European Commission President Romano Prodi, European Transport Commissioner Loyola de Palacio and European Competition Commissioner Mario Monti, Brussels
  - EU Council of Ministers working group on central and southeast Europe meets, Brussels
  - European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen meets Armenian president Robert Kocharian, Brussels
- Thursday 4 -  
Friday 5
- European Economic and Social Committee-Slovenia joint consultative committee meets, Rome
  - European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Moldova and meets foreign affairs minister Nicolae Dudau, president Vladimir Voronin, prime minister Vasile Tarlev and parliament vice-president Vladimir Misin, Chisinau
- Friday 5
- EU Council of Ministers working party on Eastern Europe and Central Asia meets in Troika formation with Ukraine, Brussels
- Tuesday 9-  
Wednesday 10
- Presidents of the supreme audit institutions of the European Union and the acceding states and candidate countries and the European Court of Auditors meet, Prague
- Wednesday 10 -  
Thursday 11
- European External Relations Commissioner Chris Patten visits the Western Balkans
- Thursday 11 -  
Friday 12
- European Economic and Social Committee-Czech Republic joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- Thursday 18-  
Friday 19
- European Enlargement Commissioner Günter Verheugen visits Jordan
- 2004**
- Spring 2004**
- European Economic and Social Committee-Hungary joint consultative committee meets, Brussels
- February -  
March**
- European Parliament debates Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey regular reports
- March 1
- Designation of the Commissioners from the acceding states
- April 2004**
- European Parliament hearings of the Commissioners from the acceding states who will serve from May to November 2004

- European Commission Opinion on Croatia's accession
- May 2004**
- Saturday 1st
- Entry into force of the accession treaty (according to conclusions of **General Affairs Council, 18.11.02**)
  - Accession of the ten new member states (subject to ratification)
- Monday 3 -  
Thursday 6
- Extraordinary session of the EP, as the observers from the 10 new member states become full members
  - Possible European Parliament informal vote of confirmation of the new Commissioners from the new member states
- June 2004**
- Thursday 10 -  
Sunday 13
- Elections to the European Parliament in 25 member states.
- July 2004**
- Sunday 20
- Constituent session of the new European Parliament
  - Confirmation of the designated new President of the European Commission who will take up office from November 2004
- September/October**
- European Parliament hearings of the 25 designated Commissioners who will take up office from November 2004.
- October 25-28
- European Parliament plenary session and confirmation of the new Commission, which will hold office from 1 November 2004 to October 31 2009.

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