



Paris, 19 March 2025

POLITICAL OPINION
on the European Commission work programme for 2025

- (1) The Senate European Affairs Committee,
- (2) Having regard to Article 12 of the Treaty on European Union,
- (3) Having regard to the reply of the European Commission on 4 June 2024 (C (2024) 3839 final) to its political opinion of 7 December 2023 on the Commission work programme for 2024,
- (4) Having regard to the report by Mr Enrico Letta on the Single Market, entitled "Much more than a market - Speed, Security, Solidarity - Empowering the Single Market to deliver a sustainable future and prosperity for all EU citizens", dated 17 April 2024,
- (5) Having regard to the report by Mr Mario Draghi on "A Competitiveness Strategy for Europe", dated 9 September 2024,
- (6) Having regard to the report by Mr Sauli Niinistö, entitled "Safety Together: Strengthening Europe's Civilian and Military Preparedness and Readiness", dated 30 October 2024,

- (7) Having regard to the political guidelines entitled "The choice of Europe: Political Guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029" and their presentation on 18 July 2024 by Ms Ursula von der Leyen, then candidate for a second term as President of the European Commission,
- (8) Having regard to the European Commission report of 24 July 2024 on the state of the rule of law in the European Union in 2024 (COM(2024) 800 final)
- (9) Having regard to the mission letters to the Commissioners-designate, dated 17 September 2024,
- (10) Having regard to the start of the term of office of the new European Commission and the speech given by its President, Ms Ursula von der Leyen, on 1st December 2024,
- (11) Having regard to the information report on the legislative excess of the European Union No. 190 (2024-2025) - 4 December 2024 - by Jean-François Rapin, Didier Marie and Catherine-Morin-Desailly, drawn up on behalf of the European Affairs Committee,
- (12) Having regard to the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 11 February 2025 setting out its work programme for 2025, entitled "Moving Forward Together: A Bolder, Simpler, Faster Union", COM (2025) 45 final,
- (13) Having regard to the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 11 February 2025, entitled "The Road to the next Multiannual Financial Framework", COM(2025) 46 final,

(14) On the change of geopolitical era and its consequences for the priorities of the European Union

- (15) Notes that the European Commission drew up its work programme for 2025, presented on 11 February, against a backdrop of doubts and geopolitical instability marked by the return of high-intensity war to European soil since 2022 following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the growing contestation of international rules by state and non-state actors, the persistence of the terrorist threat, the rise in energy costs, and an increase in unfair competition;
- (16) Takes note of the seven political guidelines of this programme, which attempt to draw lessons from this context for the period 2024-2029, namely "A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness", "A new era for European defence and security", "Supporting people and strengthening our societies and social model", "Sustaining our quality of life: Food security, water and nature", "Protecting our democracy, upholding our values", "A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships" and "Delivering together and preparing our Union for the future", as well as the 51 new initiatives planned as part of its work programme for 2025;
- (17) Stresses, however, that since the presentation of this programme, "the time for illusions is over", to use the words of the President of the European Commission,¹ and the European Union has entered a new era of instability and insecurity, symbolised by an unprecedented diplomatic rapprochement between Russia and the United States, by US President Donald Trump's desire to obtain a rapid ceasefire in Ukraine, by the need for EU Member States to provide security guarantees to Ukraine while "rearming" themselves, and by the US authorities' decision to increase tariffs on European imports;

¹ Speech to the European Parliament on 11 March 2025.

- (18) Affirms that in order to adapt urgently to this period of crisis, the Member States and European Union must give priority to their overall "rearmament" in their defence and security policies, in crisis preparedness, in research and innovation, in revitalising the industrial base, in implementing a digital industrial policy and in preserving food, energy and environmental security, in order to ensure the strategic autonomy of the European continent and the protection of its citizens;
- (19) In this context, notes that while the majority of the proposals put forward in this programme seem relevant in the medium and long term, there are far too many of them given the need to concentrate efforts on the urgent issues already mentioned, and wonders whether it will be possible to finance and complete them all;
- (20) Recommends, therefore, that the European Union concentrate its efforts on the following three political priorities: strengthening the defence and security of the European Union and protecting its democratic model; boosting the competitiveness and sustainability of European economies and preserving the quality of life of its citizens, as well as our social model; making Europe's voice heard in the world;
- (21) Also considers that the European Union's work programme should be updated "as necessary" during implementation, if circumstances so require;
- (22) **On the financing of European policies**
- (23) Notes the massive and immediate need for funding to "rearm Europe" and support Ukraine; welcomes the presentation by the European Commission on 5 March of a dedicated action plan - outside the work programme – potentially mobilising up to €800 billion for the defence industry; notes that this action plan would authorise Member States to provide more public funding for defence at national level by activating the national opt-out clause in the Stability and Growth Pact, would also make it possible to grant €150 billion in loans to Member States for investment in the defence sector, and would redirect certain cohesion policy funds towards defence spending; notes the conclusions of the European Council of 6

March 2025 calling upon the European Commission to propose additional sources of defence funding at EU level;

- (24) Recalls that, in its political guidelines for 2024-2029, the European Commission called for an "investment shock" to benefit defence, research and innovation, the development of a digital industry and skills, the decarbonisation of European economies, and the strengthening of the Europol (police cooperation agency) and Frontex (border and coast guard agency) European agencies, without specifying how these investments would be financed;
- (25) States also that from 2028 onwards, the European Union will have to repay the instalments on loans under the European "Next Generation EU" recovery plan, amounting to between €25 billion and €30 billion a year, and points out that the European budget guarantees certain loans to Ukraine;
- (26) Stresses, therefore, that the European Union will have to make budgetary choices, as it is unable to finance the new priorities mentioned above and make the repayments for the Next Generation EU plan while keeping Member State contributions to the European Union budget stable and avoiding any progress on the creation of new own resources;
- (27) Points out that the funding of these priorities will largely depend on the outcome of the negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which are due to begin in July, so that this future long-term European budget can then come into force from 2028;

- (28) Takes note in this respect of the European Commission communication entitled "The Road to the next Multiannual Financial Framework", dated 11 February 2025,² which proposed simplifying the budget architecture by merging traditional European policies into a single budget heading, facilitating flexible use of the multiannual financial framework, and making the payment of European funds conditional on each Member State committing to national reform plans;
- (29) Solemnly affirms its opposition as a matter of principle to any "renationalisation" in the forthcoming negotiations on the financing of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and cohesion policy, pillar policies which guarantee European food security and solidarity with the most vulnerable regions and people; reaffirms the need for autonomous and stable budgets for these essential policies and warns of the risk of excluding the regions from management of the Structural Funds;
- (30) Calls once again for the prompt introduction of new own resources for the European Union budget in order to allow repayment of the loans taken out to finance the "Next Generation EU" recovery plan from 2028 onwards and to avoid a further increase in national contributions to the European budget; also calls for national parliaments to be closely involved in the process of introducing these own resources, especially as they will have to ratify the relevant Council decision; recalls that on 22 December 2021, the European Commission proposed the introduction of three new own resources for this budget, based on revenue from the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), resources generated by the proposed carbon adjustment mechanism at EU borders, and a fraction of the residual profits of multinational companies, followed on 20 June 2023 by the collection of a temporary statistical resource based on the gross operating surplus of companies;
- (31) Notes that financial support for European rearmament and investments for the future also requires the mobilisation of

² COM (2025) 46 final.

private savings; following the reports by Mr Christian Noyer,³ Mr Enrico Letta and Mr Mario Draghi, therefore calls for the establishment of a Savings and Investments Union in order to develop European long-term savings products and stimulate securitisation,⁴ while respecting the safeguards put in place following the 2008 financial crisis;

(32) Considers it necessary, in order to finance European priorities, for the Government and its European partners to work with the European Investment Bank (EIB) to attract private capital, including for financing the European defence industry; notes the EIB's growing involvement in the financing of mixed civilian and military equipment (UAVs, cyber security, etc.); in view of the urgent need for funding, however, calls on all parties to consolidate this commitment by working to revise the EIB's mandate in order to remove the obstacles to its support for the European defence industry, in accordance with the conclusions of the European Council of 6 March 2025;

(33) On support for Ukraine, strengthening the European Union's defence and security, and protecting democracy

(34) *On support for Ukraine*

(35) Salutes the courage of Ukraine and the Ukrainians who have been under attack by Russia since 24 February 2022; reiterates the importance of the support of the Member States and the European Union in coming to their aid and notes that this support must last as long as necessary, for both the Ukrainian military forces and reconstruction of the country; at a time when Russian-American talks are being organised on the future of the country, stresses the need to involve the Ukrainian authorities and the Member States of the European Union on a long-term basis in these talks; notes that a return to peace is conditional upon Ukraine being given credible security guarantees, on those responsible for starting the conflict being identified and the perpetrators of war crimes being prosecuted, and on Ukrainian children abducted by the

³ Report on "Developing capital markets to finance the future: proposals for a Savings and Investments Union" by Christian Noyer, former Governor of the Banque de France, April 2024.

⁴ Financial operation consisting of transforming illiquid assets - i.e. assets that cannot be sold easily, such as bank loans - into financial securities.

Russian authorities being returned to their parents, as demanded in its political opinion of 9 March 2023;⁵

- (36) Also reaffirms its support for Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which are facing up to the Russian Federation's "hybrid attacks" with courage and determination and playing a major role in "sounding the alarm" about the need to adapt European policies to the current geopolitical upheavals;
- (37) *On the defence and space policy of the Member States of the European Union*
- (38) Stresses that the rapid deterioration in the international security context and the Russian threat to the Member States of the European Union must lead them to invest more in their defence tools and step up their preparations in this area; stresses that the publication of the White Paper on the future of European defence must provide an opportunity to assess the risks weighing on the European Union and to define the ways of asserting the European Union's strategic autonomy;
- (39) Recalls that the European Union has encouraged the "ramping up" of Member States' defence industries in order to supply military equipment to Ukraine through the Ammunition Production Support Regulation (ASAP) and the Instrument for the Reinforcement the European Defence Industry through Common Procurement (EDIRPA);

⁵ Political opinion of 9 March 2023 on the forced mass transfers of Ukrainian children by the Russian Federation.

- (40) Notes that the European Commission is now taking a number of new initiatives to increase the European Union's involvement in the field of defence, with the appointment of a European Commissioner for Defence and the presentation of a European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS) and a proposal for a regulation providing for a new European Defence Industry Programme (EDIP); in accordance with its European resolution No. 33 (2024-2025) of 30 December 2024,⁶ points out first of all that this European support must complement and not replace the efforts made by the Member States in favour of their national defence, since the Member States have exclusive responsibility for national security under the Treaties and conduct the common security and defence policy within an intergovernmental framework; also points out that, while the European Defence Industrial Strategy's objective of doing "more and better together" is shared, its justification depends on the fact that the programme's funds genuinely serve to develop the European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) and the European Union's strategic autonomy; thus reaffirms that the programme's funds must be reserved for supporting defence products for which the design authority, and not the manufacturing authority, is located in the European Union or associated countries, and that this text must reflect the highest possible ambition and be based on a rate of components originating in the European Union or associated countries that should not be lower than the 65% provided in the EDIRPA regulation and, if possible, aim for a minimum rate of 80%, with a view to increasing this rate in the near future, in order to strengthen the EDTIB in the long term;
- (41) Approves the principle of a Space Act to limit the risks of collision and interference between space objects and their environment, address the growing threats to the security of Member States' space systems, and measure the environmental impact of space activities more effectively, in line with its European resolution No. 37 (2024-2025) of 21 January 2025;⁷ stresses, moreover, the need for the European Union to preserve its access to space in order to ensure its strategic autonomy;
- (42) *On crisis preparedness, health and safety*

- (43) Affirms that the increasing threats to the European Union and the upsurge in climate change-related natural disasters in the Member States mean that they must be better prepared for crises; welcomes, in this respect, the ideas set out in Mr Sauli Niinistö's report published at the end of October 2024, and looks forward to the European Commission crisis-preparedness strategy which is to result from it; agrees on the need to prepare the population of the Member States more effectively for crises by instilling a spirit of defence and disseminating good practice from school onwards, and to improve the coordination of the services responsible for crisis prevention and response; as stated in its political opinion of 20 June 2024,⁸ considers that such a reform must confirm the primary responsibility of the Member States in preparing for and managing crises, as well as the logistical support and coordination role of the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) attached to the European Commission, and reinforce the relevance of the European Civil Protection Mechanism in mobilising European resources against natural disasters;
- (44) In line with its above-mentioned political opinion of 20 June 2024, once again draws attention to the precarious legal situation of volunteer firefighters, due to their erroneous assimilation by the institutions of the European Union with "workers" within the meaning of Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003, even though they do not carry out this activity in a professional capacity and the provisions of the Labour Code and the Civil Service Code do not apply to them;
- (45) Notes that this legal assimilation gives rise to a genuine misunderstanding as it is likely to call into question the model for organising emergency services in France; has taken due

⁶ Senate European Resolution No. 33 (2024-2025) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the European Defence Industrial Programme and a framework of measures to ensure the timely availability and supply of defence products, dated 30 December 2024.

⁷ Senate European Resolution No. 37 (2024-2025), dated 21 January 2025, on the adoption of European regulations on space traffic management and the development of a "green" space.

⁸ Political opinion of 20 June 2024 on recognising the specific nature of the commitment of volunteer fire fighters and strengthening the European civil protection system.

note of the Commission's legal arguments that it is legally unable to act on the request made by Senate,⁹ but notes that, in many precedents corresponding to its political priorities, it has been able to "find" a suitable legal basis, such as the provisions of Article 352 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), that is applicable when European action is necessary but the Treaties do not provide for European Union competence; therefore once again solemnly calls for the tabling and presentation of a specific European directive on voluntary citizen involvement with a view to protecting and encouraging it and promoting operational European solidarity in the face of climate change;

- (46) Approves, in accordance with its political opinion of 5 April 2024,¹⁰ the presentation on 11 March this year of a European Critical Medicines Act, which should make it possible to draw up a European list of essential and priority treatments in order to guarantee their availability to citizens, as well as a strategy on medical countermeasures and a strategy for stockpiling medicines, in order to learn the lessons from the dependencies observed during the Covid-19 pandemic;
- (47) Also calls for the continuation of strategic investment in research dedicated to health (Innovative Health Initiative), as well as the rapid implementation of the European Health Data Space, and approves the action plan for hospital cybersecurity; finally, draws attention to the need to avoid "duplication" between European Regulations (EU) 2024/1689 of 13 June 2024 on artificial intelligence (AI)¹¹ and (EU) 2017/745 of 5 April 2017 on medical devices;¹²

⁹ Response by Maroš Šefčovič, then Vice-President of the European Commission, dated 6 September 2024, to the aforementioned political opinion of 20 June 2024 of the Senate European Affairs Committee.

¹⁰ Political opinion of 5 April 2024 on European Union action against medicine shortages.

¹¹ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act).

¹² Regulation (EU) 2017/745 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2017 on medical devices, amending Directive 2001/83/EC, Regulation (EC) No

- (48) Also calls for further European cooperation in setting up independent health quality assessment processes for processed foods, and in improving understanding of mental health issues, in line with the conclusions of the final report of the Conference on the Future of Europe in the field of health;¹³
- (49) Welcomes with interest the principle of a new EU internal security strategy to update the one adopted in 2020; considers that this strategy should focus on the fight against organised crime, in particular drug trafficking, whose cross-border activities threaten European democratic societies, and also against terrorism, which is still very present in Europe, as well as trafficking in human beings, sexual abuse of minors, cybercrime and money laundering; in this context, approves the need to tighten up the European regulatory framework on drug "precursors" and firearms trafficking; welcomes the commitment and competence of the staff of Europol, the European police cooperation agency, in carrying out the abovementioned tasks, while questioning the relevance of the European Commission's announcement of a new review of the agency's mandate and a doubling of its staff by 2030; points out that Europol is and must remain an agency providing support and expertise to the police services of the Member States and associated countries;
- (50) Stresses that cybersecurity incidents are one of the threats to be taken into account; in line with its political opinion of 13 December 2023,¹⁴ welcomes the fact that the European Union and Member States have become aware of this threat and set up a European cybersecurity architecture, but reiterates the need for long-term funding to guarantee effective cooperation, and is concerned by the institutional complexity resulting from the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2025/38 of 19 December 2024, known as the "Cybersolidarity Act";¹⁵

178/2002 and Regulation (EC) No 1223/2009 and repealing Council Directives 90/385/EEC and 93/42/EEC.

¹³ This report was submitted to the heads of the European institutions on 9 May 2022.

¹⁴ Political opinion of 13 December 2023 on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down measures to strengthen solidarity and capacities in the Union to detect, prepare for and respond to cyber security threats and incidents - COM(2023) 209 final.

¹⁵ Regulation (EU) 2025/38 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 December 2024 laying down measures to strengthen solidarity and capacities in the

- (51) Recalls that the presentation of a reform of the Returns Directive on 11 March, resulting from the conclusions of the European Council of 17 October 2024, in response to requests from a majority of Member States, is intended to facilitate the expulsion of illegal migrants, whereas less than 20% of expulsion decisions are currently enforced in the European Union; calls for the European Pact on Asylum and Migration, which is due to enter into force in June 2026, to be implemented as soon as possible; pending its entry into force, questions the premature nature of the Commission's announcement of a new European strategy for asylum and immigration;
- (52) Endorses the principle of increasing the human and operational resources of Frontex, the European border and coastguard agency, in order to step up its support for the Member States in the surveillance of European borders and migratory routes and in the organisation of returns; in accordance with its political opinion of 14 December 2022 on the future of Frontex,¹⁶ considers it necessary to set up a joint parliamentary monitoring group for the agency's activities, with the participation of the European Parliament and the national parliaments of the European Union, along the lines of the existing group for monitoring Europol;
- (53) *Protecting democracy and fundamental rights*
- (54) Recalls that freedom of expression is one of the foundations of European democratic societies and that it is exercised within the framework of the law; stresses the need to remain vigilant with regard to the protection of journalists and the freedom of the press, in particular in the context of the application of the European Regulation on freedom of the media and the establishment of the European committee on media services (Media Board) on 11 February this year, to which the aforementioned Regulation confers a central role, in order to strengthen the independence, freedom and pluralism of the media;

Union to detect, prepare for and respond to cyber security threats and incidents, and amending Regulation (EU) 2021/694 (Cyber-Solidarity Act).

¹⁶ Political opinion of 14 December 2022 on the future of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex).

- (55) Takes note of the presentation by the European Commission of its report on the rule of law in the Member States in 2024, as well as of the various forthcoming communications on the protection of fundamental rights, and notes that 68% of the recommendations in the 2023 report have been taken up by the Member States; stresses the value of including in the report the main advances made by the most advanced candidate countries for accession to the European Union; expresses, however, its failure to understand the Commission's intention to supplement the report with a "Single Market dimension [...] to address rule of law issues affecting companies, especially SMEs operating across borders",¹⁷ as it believes that this would lead to a "blurring of the boundaries" between the protection of fundamental rights and that of the activities of European companies;
- (56) Approves the choice of a new roadmap on women's rights to consolidate the priority given by the European Union to promoting equality between men and women in all areas; recalls that real progress has been made on women's rights with the implementation of the European framework for the effective implementation of the principle of equal pay for men and women, the accession of the European Union to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (known as the Istanbul Convention), and the adoption of the directive on combating violence against women; once again affirms its support for Afghan women whose fundamental rights are being violated by the Taliban regime, in accordance with the provisions of its European resolution no. 27 (2024-2025) of 25 November 2024;¹⁸
- (57) Deeply deplors, however, the lack of any ambition in preventing and combating corruption, when European Union rules in this area can be largely improved; notes the decision of the European Union institutions to set up a simple interinstitutional ethics body with no real power or autonomous resources; calls therefore once again, in

¹⁷ European Commission political guidelines for 2024-2029, p 31.

¹⁸ European resolution no. 27 (2024-2025) of 25 November 2024 on appropriate measures against violations of women's fundamental rights in Afghanistan committed by the Taliban regime.

accordance with its political opinion of 14 February 2024,¹⁹ for the introduction of declarations of interests and assets for all members and managerial staff of the EU institutions and bodies, and for the creation of an independent EU Ethics Committee with investigative powers; adds that this Committee should publish an annual report on the monitoring of the rule of law by the EU institutions, which would usefully supplement the work of the European Commission on such monitoring in the Member States;

- (58) Notes the growing role played by social networks in providing information to the public; points out that their economic model is based on the "attention economy" and aims to encourage users to stay connected for as long as possible in order to collect their data, which may encourage them to disseminate violent, sexualised or extreme content, and makes them vulnerable to foreign interference and attempts to manipulate information;
- (59) Considers that the "European Democracy Shield" to be presented by the European Commission in autumn 2025 should aim to strengthen the European Union's capacity to prevent and combat foreign interference and manipulation of information; in this context, recommends the creation of a European network for the detection and exchange of best practices (which could be called "Vigie Europe"), based on the French service for the detection of, and vigilance against foreign digital interference (Viginum), and in conjunction with the application of the aforementioned European regulation on media freedom;
- (60) Calls for uncompromising compliance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the European Digital Markets Act (DMA) and the European Digital Services Act (DSA) by all digital players wishing to benefit from the internal market, for the strictest diligence on the part of the major online platforms in the current investigations under these regulations, and for this normative framework to be reinforced in accordance with the recommendations of its political opinion of 13 March 2025 on

¹⁹ Political opinion of 18 March 2024 on preventing and combating corruption in the European Union.

the strict application of the European Union's digital regulatory framework and calling for the strengthening of the conditions for genuine European digital sovereignty, adopted by its European Affairs Committee on 13 March 2025; also calls for the European Cloud Services Certification (EUCS) project to be relaunched;

- (61) Stresses with gravity that the European Commission, when presenting its proposal for a regulation COM(2022) 209 final laying down rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse on 11 May 2022, had emphasised the urgency of adopting this reform; notes, however, that negotiations on this project appear to have been blocked for several months; therefore solemnly calls for the adoption of this important reform without delay, in accordance with the recommendations of its political opinion of 15 February 2023;²⁰
- (62) Regrets the European Commission's withdrawal of the proposal for a directive on liability in the field of artificial intelligence (AI), the aim of which was to establish a harmonised European civil liability regime in the event of damage caused by the use of AI;
- (63) Welcomes, however, the forthcoming presentation of a European Digital Networks Act, with a view to harmonising European policies on the radio spectrum and providing for universal service obligations; adds that these networks should be considered as critical entities within the meaning of the Directive on the resilience of such entities²¹ and should therefore benefit from its safeguards;
- (64) **On boosting competitiveness, ensuring the sustainability of Europe's economies and preserving our citizens' quality of life and our social model**
- (65) *On boosting competitiveness and pursuing decarbonisation*
- (66) Considers that the continuation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with an autonomous budget after 2027 is a

²⁰ Political opinion of 15 February 2023 on the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse - COM(2022) 209 final.

strategic priority for the European Union because of its essential contribution to European and global food security; points out that, for the period 2021-2027, the increase in the level of environmental ambition has gone hand in hand with a reduction in the CAP budget of €85 billion in value compared with the years 2024-2020, and with the lowering of protection for the internal market through the signing of free trade agreements that are sometimes unfavourable to farmers, making it difficult for the CAP to meet all its objectives and, as a result, creating a crisis in the farming world;

- (67) Welcomes the sectoral measures taken by the European Commission to simplify the operation of the CAP and its "vision" for the future of this policy, as expressed on 19 February 2025; on the basis of its political opinion of 17 December 2024,²² hopes that the CAP will provide farmers with an adequate income, revitalise European agricultural production, ensure the resilience of farms in the face of climate change, and enable them to be passed on to young farmers;
- (68) Deplores the announcement by the European Commission of the conclusion of trade negotiations with the Mercosur countries, despite France's opposition; recalls the attachment of the European Union to a market economy allowing free competition and to the settlement of disputes within the multilateral framework of the World Trade Organisation (WTO); notes, however, that it is now facing intense international competition, uncooperative behaviour on the part of certain third countries, which are setting up "barriers to entry" to prevent access to their own markets and subsidising their exporting companies, and now faces the risk of a general increase in customs tariffs; in this context, stresses the need for the EU not to be naive if it is to remain a global industrial power; affirms that, to this end, it must use all the trade defence tools at its disposal to protect its industry from unfair trade measures implemented by certain third countries; in this respect, calls for a "proportionate" but rapidly effective European response to the announced

²² Political opinion of 17 December 2024 on the future of the Common Agricultural Policy.

increase in US tariffs on European agricultural and industrial products;

- (69) Calls more generally for genuine reciprocity in compliance with social and environmental standards in the negotiation of current and future trade agreements with third countries, as well as for the assurance of fair market conditions and access for European companies to public contracts in the third countries concerned; reiterates its call for a revision of the methodology for negotiating international trade agreements in order to involve national parliaments more closely in the negotiation process;
- (70) Takes note of the current consultation on the Common Fisheries Policy and hopes that the European Maritime Affairs, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMAAF) will be maintained; calls on the European Union, in line with its political opinion of 25 May 2023,²³ to make the preservation and development of small-scale and coastal fishing a strategic priority, in particular by simplifying administrative procedures for fishermen, as it contributes to the food sovereignty of the Member States, is an asset for coastal regions, and helps to protect marine biodiversity;
- (71) Takes note of the forthcoming presentation of a European Oceans Pact, the stated aims of which are to defend healthy and "productive" oceans, to stimulate a "competitive, resilient and sustainable EU blue economy",²⁴ and to consolidate and extend the European Union's knowledge of the marine environment; considers that this pact must not have the effect of allowing the industrialisation of the sea;
- (72) Shares the desire expressed at European level to boost the competitiveness of European economies, as stated in the Budapest Declaration of 8 November 2024 and embodied in the "Competitiveness Compass" presented on 17 January 2025 on the basis of the reports by Mr Enrico Letta and Mr

²³ Political opinion of 25 May 2023 on the protection of the French fishing industry and on measures recommended within the framework of the European Union Action Plan to protect and restore marine ecosystems for sustainable and resilient fisheries, presented by the European Commission on 21 February 2023.

²⁴ Extracts from the European Commission document setting out the issues at stake in the current public consultation on this pact.

Mario Draghi; supports its objectives of improving the financing of innovation, continuing efforts to decarbonise, reinforcing economic security and limiting the European Union's dependence;

- (73) In this context, supports the ongoing simplification of European Union law proposed by the European Commission through three Omnibus packages relating to "green finance",²⁵ facilitating investment, and easing constraints on the activities of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); recalls that in 2024 alone, the European Union will have adopted 1,433 normative acts and notes that, in certain areas, the state of the law is now a source of additional burdens, paralysed decision-making and risks of litigation;
- (74) With regard to corporate due diligence requirements, reiterates nevertheless, in accordance with its political opinion of 28 June 2022,²⁶ that a balance must be struck between streamlining procedures on the one hand, and taking account of the objectives of defending human rights and the environment on the other; emphasises once again, in line with its European resolution No. 124 (2021-2022) of 5 April 2022,²⁷ its qualified support for the principle of a carbon border adjustment mechanism, given the risk of European exporting companies losing competitiveness as a result of an increase in the price of the commodities covered by the mechanism, and reiterates its call for a solution to be found that complies with World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules by the time of the review clause in 2026;

²⁵ This includes Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 ("green taxonomy"), Directive (EU) 2022/2464 of 14 December 2022 amending Regulation (EU) No 537/2014 and Directives 2004/109/EC, 2006/43/EC and 2013/34/EU as regards the publication of corporate sustainability information (CSRD for "Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive"), Directive (EU) 2024/1760 of 13 June 2024 on corporate sustainability due diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937 and Regulation (EU) [2023/2857](#) ("due diligence") and the carbon border adjustment mechanism.

²⁶ Political opinion of 28 June 2022 on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on corporate sustainability due diligence COM(2022) 71 final.

²⁷ Senate European Resolution No. 124 (2021-2022) of 5 April 2022 on the "Fit for 55" package.

- (75) Supports the support and funding measures for innovative companies, which must benefit from a favourable European ecosystem in order to prevent the relocation of this talent; considers, in this respect, the value of creating a "twenty-eighth legal regime" for these companies so that they can benefit from harmonised European rules and a "one-stop shop";
- (76) Also supports the forthcoming recognition at European level of the status of intermediate-sized enterprises (ETIs), which play a major economic role, on the basis of the positions defended by the Senate's European resolution No. 69 (2024-2025) of 10 March 2025;²⁸
- (77) Eagerly awaits the revision of the "public procurement" directive²⁹ announced for 2026, to reduce the complexity of the current procedures for awarding these contracts, which weighs heavily on the activities of contracting companies but also on the choices made by local and regional authorities as contracting authorities; welcomes the European Commission's stated intention of recognising a "European preference" for contracts in strategic sectors on the occasion of this reform; considers in this respect that the digital sector is one of these "strategic sectors";

²⁸ Senate European Resolution No. 69 (2024-2025) of 10 March 2025 on the recognition by the European Union of the category of intermediate-sized enterprises.

²⁹ Directive 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC.

- (78) In addition, stresses once again the need for an "*aggiornamento*" of European competition policy, the implementation methods of which have sometimes had the paradoxical effect of accentuating intra-European competition to the benefit of competing companies from third countries; with this in mind, welcomes the pragmatic changes to the regime applicable to State aid and once again stresses its desire for an update of the definition of "relevant markets" adopted by the European Commission; considers it necessary to encourage the development of "European industrial champions" and to prevent European companies in strategic sectors from having to form alliances with partners in third countries, at the risk of suffering foreign interference, technological pillage and/or a loss of know-how on European soil;
- (79) Takes note of the forthcoming presentation of a "package of measures" for the chemical industry aimed, on the one hand, at simplifying the European "REACH" regulation³⁰ concerning the registration, evaluation and authorisation of chemical substances, and, on the other hand, at clarifying the question of "forever chemicals" or PFAS; stresses, on the former point, that the Senate will be vigilant in preserving the lavender essential oil industry and the continued use of lead by the heritage trades (stained-glass workers, roofers, organ builders, etc.) which enabled the reconstruction of Notre-Dame de Paris, on the basis of its political opinions of 31 May 2022³¹ and 21 July 2022;³² on the latter point, recalls the promulgation in France, on 27 February this year, of Law no. 2025/188³³ banning PFAS in a certain number of everyday products, such as clothing, and requiring the monitoring of their presence in drinking water by 2026;
- (80) *On decarbonisation, energy, transport and the circular economy*

³⁰ Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, amending Directive 1999/45/EC and repealing Council Regulation (EEC) No 793/93 and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1488/94 as well as Council Directive 76/769/EEC and Commission Directives 91/155/EEC, 93/67/EEC, 93/105/EC and 2000/21/EC.

- (81) Welcomes the presentation of a European Clean Industrial Deal and the announcement of a €100 billion package to support key industrial sectors in their deployment of clean technologies; points out that this deal should make it possible to support the transition of European industry towards a low-carbon economy and to make this decarbonisation a factor of growth; stresses with satisfaction that this deal respects the principle of technological neutrality; considers that the deal should also support demand for clean products manufactured in the European Union;
- (82) Takes note of the presentation of a roadmap to end the European Union's energy dependence on Russia, and of an Affordable Energy Action Plan, the main aims of which are to decouple electricity tariffs from fluctuations in the gas market, to facilitate the conclusion of long-term supply contracts, including power purchase agreements and contracts for difference,³⁴ and to promote energy investment and bulk orders for liquefied natural gas (LNG); considers that the explicit aim of these initiatives must be to consolidate the European Union's energy independence;
- (83) Notes that the European automotive sector is at a critical juncture, facing rapid technological developments, the obligation to stop producing new thermal engine cars by 2035, and biases in competition; takes note of the flexibility mechanism announced by the European Commission on 3 March to ensure that carmakers that fall short of their CO₂ emission reduction targets do not have to pay fines in 2025; notes that this mechanism gives extra time until 2027 for

³¹ Political opinion of 31 May 2022 on the preservation of the lavender-based essential oils industry, threatened by the revision of the European regulations on chemicals known as "REACH" (No. 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006) and "CLP" (No. 1272/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008).

³² Senate European Resolution no. 150 (2021-2022) of 26 August 2022, on the preservation of heritage industries, in particular stained glass, organ building, the restoration and conservation of historic monuments and buildings, works of art and cultural property, threatened by the ban on lead or the authorisation procedure as envisaged by the revision of Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006, known as "REACH", concerning the Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals.

³³ Law no. 2025/188 of 27 February 2025 aimed at protecting the population from the risks associated with perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances.

³⁴ Energy contracts in which the State is a co-contractor.

companies in difficulty without penalising the "good performers", who will themselves benefit from an emissions credit; approves the support plan for the automotive industry, announced on 5 March, to secure a competitive supply chain for raw materials for batteries, support research and production of connected and autonomous vehicles, and encourage the "greening" of company fleets, which account for 60% of the European new car fleet;

- (84) In this context, wishes to see the development of off-road freight and reiterates its support for the objectives of using cleaner heavy goods vehicles; for this reason, and in the name of both road safety and the preservation of road infrastructure, opposes the temporary authorisation to increase the maximum weight to 44 tonnes for all types of heavy goods vehicles in road-only cross-border traffic and the conditions for the circulation of European modular systems for cross-border operations provided for in proposal for a directive COM(2023) 445 final presented³⁵ by the European Commission, in accordance with the proposal for a European resolution of its European Affairs Committee No 340 (2024-2025) of 12 February 2025;³⁶
- (85) Considers that the decarbonisation of the economy is inconceivable without appropriate measures to guarantee an ecological transition that is "fair for all"; stresses in this respect the importance of making the Just Transition Fund³⁷ permanent, and of setting up the Social Climate Fund³⁸ from 2026 to enable the Member States to achieve the objectives

³⁵ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic - COM(2023) 445 final.

³⁶ Proposal for a European resolution No 340 (2024-2025) of 12 February 2025 by the Senate European Affairs Committee on the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Directive 96/53/EC laying down for certain road vehicles circulating within the Community the maximum authorised dimensions in national and international traffic and the maximum authorised weights in international traffic - COM(2023) 445 final.

³⁷ This fund has a budget of €17.5 billion for the period 2021-2027.

³⁸ The fund is due to be endowed with €65 billion over the period 2026-2032, but this funding is linked to the reform of the European carbon market. In practice, it should come from the revenues generated by the sale of greenhouse gas emission allowances from the carbon market applied to the building and road transport sectors.

set by the European Union, while supporting the most vulnerable people, businesses and regions in this transition;

- (86) Supports the principle of the European Union continuing its efforts to step up the implementation of a long-term circular economy in the Member States; recalls that the eco-design of products and increased recycling are essential conditions for moving towards a more sustainable mode of production and consumption, and are decisive factors in limiting the reliance of Member States in sourcing critical raw materials;
- (87) *In the digital sector*
- (88) Notes that the development of a European ecosystem that is conducive to the creation, development and maintenance of innovative European businesses in the digital sector is one of the keys to boosting European competitiveness and a condition for the European Union's strategic autonomy; therefore supports the initiatives announced concerning the funding of "artificial intelligence factories", in order to increase computing capacity and the number of data centres in the Member States, as well as the European strategy on quantum technology in which France must play a leading role, given its expertise;
- (89) Welcomes with interest the project for a European Business Wallet, which should provide a secure storage facility and facilitate cross-border transactions by businesses and traders; also wishes to see further consideration given to the advantages and disadvantages of introducing a digital euro, as advocated in Information Report No 708 (2023-2024) of 26 June 2024 by its European Affairs Committee;³⁹
- (90) Confirms the urgent need for better regulation of e-commerce platforms specialising in the online sale of low-cost clothing that is sometimes referred to as "disposable", whose products often contravene European rules and therefore pose a risk to human health and the environment;

³⁹ Information report "Digital Euro: For a Sovereign Europe in Payments" by Pascal Allizard and Florence Blatrix Contat on behalf of the Senate European Affairs Committee.

- (91) *On improving people's skills, social rights and quality of life*
- (92) Approves the principle of the new action plan announced to implement the "European pillars of social rights" in order to meet common challenges in the areas of social affairs, employment and skills, and, in accordance with its European Resolution No 36 (2024-2025) of 17 January 2025,⁴⁰ supports a revision of Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems to allow unemployment benefits to be paid by the State of employment while maintaining the possibility for jobseekers to be registered with the competent institution of the State of residence;
- (93) Is convinced, as is the European Commission, that the competitiveness of European economies is linked to their research and innovation capacity; therefore affirms its commitment to doubling European funding for research; notes that this capacity also depends on the success of cooperation between European universities; therefore hopes, on the basis of its political opinion of 17 October 2024,⁴¹ that European universities will be strengthened by the continued development of European university alliances and by the introduction of European labels encouraging the establishment of joint degrees;
- (94) Stresses the importance of the proposal for a directive presented on 20 March 2024⁴² by the European Commission to regulate traineeships, at a time when there are 3 million young trainees each year in the European Union, in order to improve the working conditions of trainees and to combat "false traineeships"; deplores, however, the development of the negotiations on this text in the Council, which have

⁴⁰ Senate European Resolution No. 36 (2024-2025) on reforming the collection of contributions for unemployment benefits from cross-border workers.

⁴¹ Political opinion of 17 October 2024 encouraging the development of the "European universities" initiative.

⁴² Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 March 2024 on improving and monitoring the working conditions of trainees and on combating traditional employment relationships disguised as traineeships (the "Traineeships Directive"), COM(2024) 132 final.

stripped this proposal of any ambition; calls, therefore, for a return to the initial draft text;⁴³

- (95) Strongly supports the prospect of creating a European union of skills, designed to integrate education and lifelong learning into educational pathways and working life, to strengthen the mastery of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and to facilitate the recognition of the various training courses enabling people to work in the Member States of the European Union; also stresses the importance of a European strategy for vocational education and training (VET), in order to raise the profile of the courses concerned and increase the number of people with such diplomas, and of the presentation of an initiative on the portability of skills aimed at ensuring that a person's skills acquired in one Member State are recognised by the other Member States; considers that this initiative should also support the training of working people, such as health professionals, in new technologies;
- (96) Notes that the water resilience strategy announced by the European Commission is based on the worrying observation that the quantity of water available and the quality of watercourses are steadily deteriorating as a result of cumulative factors such as climate change and pollution, and proposes three responses: restoring and protecting the water cycle; ensuring access for all to clean, healthy and affordable water; promoting a competitive European water industry and a circular water economy;

⁴³ On this point, see the communication from senators Didier Marie and Louis Vogel to the Senate's European Affairs Committee (5 December 2024).

- (97) Supports the objective of proposal for a regulation COM(2023) 645 final to prevent and reduce pollution by microplastics in the environment and the need to take effective measures to prevent losses and leaks of plastic pellets into the environment, under the conditions set out in its European resolution No 35 (2024-2025) of 17 January 2025;⁴⁴
- (98) Recalls, in accordance with its political opinion of 1th March 2022,⁴⁵ that the European Union benefits from the rich history of its Member States and is heir to a cultural, artistic and linguistic heritage that is unique in the world, to which every citizen must have access; reiterates its support for the programme known as the "New European Bauhaus", set out in the European Commission communication of 15 September 2021, and once again calls for an extension of the "European Heritage Label" created by the Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011;

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(99) On Europe's voice in the world

- (100) Notes the need to adapt the organisation and operation of the European Union to its enlargement prospects; points out that each application must be examined on a case-by-case basis and that its relevance must be assessed in the light of the "Copenhagen criteria",⁴⁶ which make the candidate countries subject to the threefold requirement of stable institutions that respect democracy, the rule of law and human rights, a viable market economy, and the adoption of the *acquis communautaire*, and is subject to the European Union's absorption capacity;
- (101) Recalls that Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia were granted candidate status for accession to the European Union on 14 December 2023; stresses that since this recognition, despite a difficult context, Ukraine's adoption of the *acquis*

⁴⁴ Senate European Resolution No. 35 (2024-2025) of 17 January 2024 on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the prevention of plastic pellet losses to reduce microplastic pollution - COM(2023) 645 final.

⁴⁵ Senate European Resolution No. 123 (2021-2022) Political opinion of 1^{er} March 2022 for a stronger European heritage policy to promote the attractiveness of territories.

⁴⁶ These criteria for accession to the European Union were defined at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 and refined at the Madrid European Council in 1995.

communautaire is progressing smoothly and should lead to the opening of the first accession chapters; stresses that the presidential election and the referendum on accession to the European Union in Moldova went smoothly, despite Russian attempts to interfere and disrupt the polls, and welcomes the Moldovan electorate's decision to confirm their wish to join the European Union; calls on the European Union to continue its support for the Moldovan authorities in order to reduce the country's institutional and economic vulnerability; deplores, however, the decision by the Georgian authorities to "freeze" Georgia's accession process and expresses its deep concern about the repression of opposition leaders and journalists;

- (102) Also welcomes the substantial progress made by the countries of the Western Balkans on their path towards accession to the European Union, as well as their desire to move closer to EU standards and to consolidate their pre-accession momentum by making full use of the support measures provided; considers, at the same time, that the resolution of open or latent conflicts between several of these States is an essential prerequisite for accession; expresses its concern at current developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia;
- (103) Emphasises the decisive contribution of the Eastern Partnership Neighbourhood Policy, which has facilitated the strengthening of political and economic ties between the European Union and Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia, as well as the modernisation of the economies of these three countries, thanks to association and free trade agreements; recommends that fresh consideration be given to consolidating the achievements of this policy and updating its priorities with regard to all the beneficiary countries, developing it in parallel with the progress of the accession negotiations with Ukraine and Moldova and taking account of the new tensions between the European Union and Georgia;
- (104) Recalls that the Mediterranean has shaped the history of Europe and that today it constitutes a basin for cultural and commercial exchanges with the countries of the southern and eastern shores, and a strategic region where the European Union must be present; welcomes the appointment of a

European Commissioner dedicated to this policy;⁴⁷ also supports the European Union's renewed ambitions for a comprehensive Euro-Mediterranean partnership concerning investment, the economy, energy, trade, transport, security and migration, which must be embodied in the Pact for the Mediterranean announced by the European Commission; believes that France must play a major role in this;

- (105) Welcomes the willingness of the current UK authorities to move closer to the European Union, five years after Brexit came into force; stresses the need to conclude a new partnership between the EU and the United Kingdom to deepen the successes of bilateral cooperation in research, transport and energy, and to facilitate the resolution of disputes over the fight against illegal immigration and the management of fishing zones through a mutually beneficial agreement;
- (106) Notes that the European Political Community is usefully asserting itself as an informal forum for dialogue between its 47 members⁴⁸ who recognise that they share European values, in order to create conditions for greater cooperation and solidarity between them;
- (107) Supports the establishment of a European strategy for the Black Sea, in order to confirm European support for the allied riparian countries and guarantee the continued accessibility of this sea;
- (108) Welcomes the intensity of the strategic partnership that has existed between the European Union and India since 2004; observes with interest the discussions under way to deepen this partnership with a view to concluding a possible bilateral agreement on trade and security at the end of the year;

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⁴⁷ Dubravka Šuica.

⁴⁸ The 27 Member States of the European Union, as well as several candidate countries for accession to the European Union (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey and Ukraine), the three Member States of the European Economic Area (Iceland; Liechtenstein; Norway), Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and three European micro-states (Andorra; Monaco; San Marino).

(109) On the Senate's areas of vigilance in all European policies

- (110) Deplores the de facto monolingualism in favour of the English language that is observed all too often within the institutions, bodies and agencies of the European Union, which weakens the democratic control of their decisions; calls therefore on these institutions, bodies and agencies to comply with the Treaties by ensuring the use of other working languages, first and foremost French, in all decision-making meetings, on their websites, in the drafting and translation of documents of importance to the European Union, and in their recruitment procedures ; reaffirms that respect for the linguistic diversity of the Member States of the European Union is a founding pillar of their accession to the European Union and of their citizens' ownership of European integration, as recognised by the provisions of Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU)⁴⁹ and Article 22 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights;⁵⁰
- (111) Calls for greater account to be taken of the specific characteristics of the Outermost Regions (ORs) and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) in the implementation and funding of all European policies; in line with its political opinion of 19 March 2025,⁵¹ calls, in this respect, for the inclusion on the European Commission's agenda of a "standards package" dedicated to the ORs in order to remove regulatory obstacles to their regional integration and combat the high cost of living, particularly in the agri-food, waste treatment and energy sectors.
- (112) Requests that the Government and European institutions continue to encourage the development of the European Parliament's headquarters in Strasbourg, a city that symbolises Franco-German reconciliation and embodies the Europe of law.

⁴⁹ This article states in particular that the European Union "shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity, and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced".

⁵⁰ "The Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity".

⁵¹ Political opinion of 19 February 2025 on the regional integration of the outermost regions of the European Union.