

Summary of contributions from National Lisbon Coordinators in reaction to the Commission's issues paper on the Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs beyond 2010 (state end of March 2009)

1. Introduction

At the National Lisbon Co-ordinators meeting on 5 December 2008 in Paris, President Barroso invited Member States to submit more detailed written contributions in reaction to the Commission issues paper of 22 November 2008.

The Commission has so far received 10 contributions (Presidency trio FR/CZ/SE, AT, DE, FI, HU, PT, SI and UK). Some other Member States have indicated that they will contribute ideas in the near future. This annex summarises the main elements of the contributions received without trying to be exhaustive.

2. General orientations:

All contributions converge on emphasising the success of the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs in particular since its renewal in 2005. As the main challenges Europe faces will continue beyond 2010, there is general recognition of the need to continue to pursue a reform agenda as set out by the Lisbon strategy. Many emphasise that securing sustainable growth and jobs has become even more important in light of the current economic crisis.

Maintaining the focus on growth and jobs also after 2010 is considered of prime importance. The Strategy is Europe's main tool to shape globalisation.

The contributions also confirm the pertinence of continuing to take action in the four priority areas (investing in people and modernising labour markets; unlocking the business potential, especially of SMEs; investing in knowledge and innovation; energy and climate change). Several contributions call for exploiting more the synergies between these priorities.

3. More specific suggestions.

All contributions highlight issues within the four priority areas which should be given higher profile, such as:

- Ø All contributions stress the importance of **investing in human capital, research and innovation** and high-quality education to maintain and increase our living standards as the labour force is diminishing due to **demographic change**.
- Ø In the same vein, many contributions emphasise the need to equip people with the skills to meet the challenges of an increasingly knowledge-based economy. **Boosting employability** will contribute to higher labour participation, a prerequisite for meeting the pressures on our social systems as a result of ageing. Supporting people through this process of change will be essential, and calls for **more efforts to be put on life-long learning**. Several contributions point to the need to **strengthen social inclusion and cohesion**.

- Ø Some contributions call for more emphasis to be put in the Strategy on raising **productivity** and on raising investments in **ICT** as essential for improving Europe's competitiveness. One contribution highlights the role of ICTs in building networks and improving cooperation across Member States in order to boost creativity and cohesion. A number of contributions also refer to the importance of **reinforcing the 'knowledge triangle' to promote innovation**.
- Ø Several contributions insist on putting more focus on the **sustainability of public finances** and in particular some propose to add a fifth transversal priority action dedicated to the efficiency and **quality** of public expenditure.
- Ø Promoting a more dynamic **business environment**, building upon **effective competition and a strong and open internal market** geared towards external trade are mentioned by many as an area on which work must be stepped up. **SMEs** play a critical role in fostering the EU's competitiveness.
- Ø The vast majority of contributions highlight the Strategy's role in turning Europe's economy into a sustainable, **low carbon** and fuel efficient one. This transformation is not only regarded as necessary to secure energy supply and to counter trends of global warming, but also as an opportunity for EU companies to get a head start in technological innovation and access to new markets. Several contributions suggest encouraging this transition by taking measures like smart regulatory design. Some mention investing in infrastructure as an important challenge for Europe's competitiveness.

All contributions also converge on the need to reinforce the external dimension of the Lisbon strategy with a strong focus on regulatory convergence:

- Ø The Lisbon strategy is seen Europe's way of **shaping up for and shaping globalisation**.
- Ø In this changing world with emerging economic players Europe will need to implement **structural reforms** to better adapt to the globalisation challenges. Some mention that at the same time, the Strategy beyond 2010 has to enable the Europe to reap the benefits from globalisation more effectively.
- Ø Promoting European **standards** (in particular its high standards for health, safety and environment) at the international level is mentioned as factors that will facilitate market access and assist EU companies as they compete in the global market place. Also further liberalisation in network industries such as telecommunications is mentioned as contributing to the competitiveness of the EU on the global market.
- Ø Finally several contributions highlight that **open markets** remain a key factor for seizing the benefits of globalisation.

Finally, besides addressing the key challenges, the contributions also refer to the need of raising ownership through changes to the governance structure and the measurement of progress on the basis of common objectives. Enhancing communication and raising visibility are also highlighted as areas that should be given prominence in the revision of the Strategy after 2010.