

Procedure file

Basic information		
COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)	1997/2178(COS)	Procedure completed
Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995		
Subject 8.20.02 Enlargement 2004: new Member States		
Geographical area Lithuania		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security, Defense	PSE SOULADAKIS Ioannis	20/03/2001
	Former committee responsible		
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	PSE HOFF Magdalene	23/09/1999
	AFET Foreign Affairs, Security and Defense Policy	PPE KRISTOFFERSEN Frode	23/06/1997
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	BUDG Budgets	PPE-DE BÖGE Reimer	24/04/2001
	CONT Budgetary Control	PSE BÖSCH Herbert	29/05/2001
	LIBE Citizens' Freedoms and Rights, Justice and Home Affairs	PPE-DE OOSTLANDER Arie M.	29/05/2001
	ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	PSE BERGER Maria	21/03/2001
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	PSE GLANTE Norbert	12/04/2000
	AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development	PSE ETTL Harald	27/03/2001
	CULT Culture, Youth, Education, Media and Sport	PSE GÖRLACH Willi	11/04/2001
	AFCO Constitutional Affairs	ELDR ANDREASEN Ole	24/01/2001

PPE-DE
[KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU](#)
[Rodi](#)[Council of the European Union](#)

Council configuration

Meeting

Date

Culture

[2427](#)

23/05/2002

[General Affairs](#)[2078](#)

30/03/1998

[General Affairs](#)[1902](#)

29/01/1996




[European Commission](#)

Commission DG

Commissioner

[Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations](#)

Key events

29/01/1996	Debate in Council	1902	Summary
15/07/1997	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(1997)2007	Summary
18/07/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
18/11/1998	Vote in committee		Summary
18/11/1998	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A4-0431/1998	
02/12/1998	Debate in Parliament		
03/12/1998	Decision by Parliament	T4-0714/1998	Summary
23/05/2000	Additional information		Summary
13/09/2000	Vote in committee		Summary
13/09/2000	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A5-0240/2000	
03/10/2000	Debate in Parliament		
04/10/2000	Decision by Parliament	T5-0420/2000	Summary
09/07/2001	Vote in committee		Summary
09/07/2001	Committee interim report tabled for plenary	A5-0253/2001	
04/09/2001	Debate in Parliament		
05/09/2001	Decision by Parliament	T5-0429/2001	Summary
05/09/2001	End of procedure in Parliament		
21/03/2002	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	1997/2178(COS)
Procedure type	COS - Procedure on a strategy paper (historic)
Procedure subtype	Commission strategy paper
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 142
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	AFET/5/13765; AFET/4/10604; AFET/4/09124

Documentation gateway					
Non-legislative basic document		COM(1997)2007	15/07/1997	EC	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A4-0431/1998 OJ C 398 21.12.1998, p. 0003	18/11/1998	EP	
Interim resolution adopted by Parliament		T4-0714/1998 OJ C 398 21.12.1998, p. 0020-0054	03/12/1998	EP	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(1998)0706	17/12/1998	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(1998)0712	17/12/1998	EC	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		COM(1999)0500	13/10/1999	EC	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		COM(1999)0507	13/10/1999	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		31999D0856 OJ L 335 28.12.1999, p. 0041	06/12/1999	EU	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A5-0240/2000 OJ C 178 22.06.2001, p. 0007	13/09/2000	EP	
Interim resolution adopted by Parliament		T5-0420/2000 OJ C 178 22.06.2001, p. 0070-0135	04/10/2000	EP	Summary
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		COM(2000)0707	08/11/2000	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(2000)0700	08/11/2000	EC	Summary
Committee interim report tabled for plenary		A5-0253/2001	09/07/2001	EP	
Interim resolution adopted by Parliament		T5-0429/2001 OJ C 072 21.03.2002, p. 0081-0173 E	05/09/2001	EP	Summary
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2001)0700	13/11/2001	EC	
Supplementary non-legislative basic document		SEC(2001)1750	13/11/2001	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		COM(2001)0657	13/11/2001	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		32002D0089 OJ L 044 14.02.2002, p. 0054-0063	28/01/2002	EU	
Non-legislative basic document		COM(2002)0700	09/10/2002	EC	Summary
Document attached to the procedure		SEC(2002)1406	09/10/2002	EC	

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

Following the application to join the European Union submitted by Lithuania (8 December 1995), the Council decided to implement the

procedure provided for in the Treaty and ask the Commission to draw up its opinion on this application. The President of the Council will write to the authorities of Lithuania, to inform them of this decision.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

PURPOSE: AGENDA 2000: presentation of the Commission's opinion on Lithuania's request for membership (8 December 1995). CONTENT: All the requests for membership were assessed using a single method based on the criteria established at the Copenhagen European Council (June 1993). These criteria are as follows: - political criteria: the candidate countries must have stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, human rights and respect for minorities, - economic criteria: these countries must have a functioning market economy, as well as the ability to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union, - criteria relating to the ability of the countries to take on the obligations of membership (in particular integration of the acquis, to a greater or lesser extent, and respect for the criteria concerning economic and monetary union). With regard to these criteria, it is emerges that : 1) in political terms, Lithuania presents the characteristics of a democracy, with stable institutions, guaranteeing the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities; 2) in economic terms, Lithuania has made considerable progress in the creation of a market economy but it would face serious difficulties in coping with the competitive pressure and market forces within the Union; 3) with regard to its capacity to assume the obligations of membership, Lithuania has made considerable progress in transposing and implementing the acquis relating particularly to the single market. If it makes additional efforts it should become able to participate fully in the single market in the medium term. Particular efforts, including investment, are still needed in the environment, agriculture and energy sectors. Lastly, strengthening of the administrative structures is indispensable if Lithuania is to have the structures to apply and enforce the acquis effectively. In conclusion, the Commission considers that negotiations for accession cannot be opened with Lithuania until this country has made sufficient progress in satisfying the conditions for membership (mainly economic criteria). Meanwhile the pre-accession strategy should be strengthened in order to help this country to prepare itself rapidly for the obligations of membership.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

Adopting the report by Mr. Frode KRISTOFFERSEN (EPP, DK), the committee emphasised that, from a political point of view, it was not advisable to divide the Baltic states into two groups, especially as there was no obvious difference in their situation, at least not between Estonia and Lithuania. It also confirmed that each and every applicant country had the right to be judged on the same basic criteria and on its own achievements. The report calls for Lithuania's accession process to be speeded up so that intensive negotiations with that country can begin shortly. The amendment by the PES group, calling upon the Council and the Commission to reassess the degree of preparation in Lithuania so that negotiations could start by the end of June 1999 was rejected.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

In adopting the report by Mr Frode KRISTOFFERSEN (EPP, DK) on Lithuania's application for membership Parliament reaffirmed a position already expressed in its resolution of 4 December 1997 according to which all countries should be placed on the same footing even if it was logical to open negotiations with the most advanced countries. It stressed the need for the advancing accession process to cover all the countries with which the European Union had signed a Europe Agreement and underlined again its firm conviction that there should be no closed groups of accession candidates. It also stressed that the opportunity for a smooth transition to the phase of intensive negotiations should remain open at all times. Considering, in general terms, that the integration of the candidate countries into the Union would substantially contribute to security in Europe, Parliament noted that Lithuania had made substantial progress in becoming a market economy and made great strides regarding the capacity to withstand competitive pressure. Nonetheless, Parliament noted that this country needed to pursue reform of the judiciary and make efforts to consolidate its capacity to implement and enforce the acquis communautaire. Welcoming the dynamic approach which the Commission had displayed in its assessments of progress in the candidate countries, Parliament reiterated that the progress already achieved should be assessed and fully taken into account in determining the date when concrete negotiations could be opened. It also reiterated that each applicant country had the right to be judged on the same basic criteria and on its own achievements. In the case of Lithuania, Parliament called for the accession process to be speeded up so that intensive negotiations with that country could begin shortly.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

This composite paper presents an outline of the progress made towards accession by all of the candidate countries in relation to the Copenhagen criteria since the publication of the Commission's opinions in June of 1997. These regular reports for each of the candidate countries concentrate on all aspects of the adoption of the Community acquis and establish a precise assessment of the capacity of each of the candidates to fulfil the political and economic criteria required for accession. In its general conclusion, the composite paper indicates that, whatever the place of the candidate countries in the accession process and in the negotiations, much remains to be done in order to fully conform to the Community acquis. In this respect, whether considering the "in" countries (those who will qualify for accession in the next wave) or the "pre-in" countries (those who have not been selected, of which Lithuania is one), the difference is not very important. Overall, the Commission's analysis of the progress achieved by each of the candidate countries since June 1997 has not persuaded it to amend its general assessment of the candidacies. Therefore, it does not consider it necessary, on the basis of the reports being presented, to make new recommendations "on the conduct or extension of the negotiations", as envisaged by the European Council. Nonetheless, the Commission stresses the increasing importance of revising the national programmes for adoption of the acquis in order to further accelerate the process of alignment with European legislation and strengthen the administrative capacity of the candidate countries, with a view to efficiently implementing all the regulations necessary for admission to the Union. The document ends by specifying that the preparatory measures undertaken must determine for now, the assistance of the Union to these countries and, subsequently, the timetable for the first accessions. For this reason, the Commission intends to submit further progress reports to the Council at the end of 1999 to allow it, if appropriate, to take decisions on the conduct or extension of the negotiations.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

PURPOSE : To present the 1999 Regular Report on Lithuania's progress towards accession. **CONTENT :** The Report describes relations between Lithuania and the Union and analyses the situation in respect of the Copenhagen criteria. It assesses the country's ability to take on the acquis and looks at judicial and administrative capacity. Relations between the EU and Lithuania - The Report looks at developments under the Europe Agreement, the Accession Partnership and the revised National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis. It outlines the allocation of Phare funds, which consisted of 328M EUR during the period 1992-1999. Twinning is foreseen for 14 projects under the 1999 programme. Copenhagen political criteria: Lithuania fulfils the political criteria. The fight against corruption, however, needs to be further strengthened. In particular, the definition of active and passive corruption should be reviewed in order to clarify that both material and immaterial advantages are covered by the legislation. Indirect payment in favour of a third party must be incorporated, as must promises accepted by public officials. Continued reform of the judiciary is also required. Copenhagen economic criteria: Lithuania has continued to make progress in establishing a functioning market economy and is on the way to being able to cope with competitive pressures and market forces within the Union in the medium term, provided it completes the remaining reform agenda. Macroeconomic stability was weakened due to the Russian crisis, when the government increased public expenditure to cushion the social and economic impact. The fiscal deficit must be reduced. Inflation is low and the role played by private ownership is increasing. Financial sector privatisation should be completed and the energy sector should be restructured. Ability to assume the obligations of membership: Whilst the country has taken steps to address some of the Accession Partnership short-term priorities, significant efforts are still needed to address priorities in the areas of energy and economic reform. With regard to nuclear energy, Lithuania has taken a welcome decision on the closure of the Ignalina plant. The Commission proposes its Euratom Loan financing facility and additional major Phare funding. Lithuania has made progress in most areas of the internal market, but more work must be done on free movement of goods in the field of standardisation and market surveillance. Enforcement capacity needs to be strengthened, in particular in the fight against piracy. State aid controls continue to be a matter of concern. Major efforts are required to bring taxation into line with the acquis. Customs administration is also a matter of concern. Significant progress has been made in the environment field, although the level of compliance is uneven. Administrative capacity to apply the acquis: Lithuania needs to strengthen implementation and administration capacity, particularly in the fields of state aid controls, environment, customs, regional policy, financial controls and social policy. There is a new public administration law, which is a welcomed development, as is the continuing reform of the judiciary.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

PURPOSE: presentation of the second 'accession partnership' for Lithuania. **CONTENT :** Like its previous version, this partnership for the accession of Lithuania resembles a work programme proposing priorities and objectives to be attained by the country in the short and the medium-term in order to become a member of the Union. These objectives take into account the regular report on Lithuania (1999). The short-term priorities (end of 2000) concern economic criteria (reduction of the budget deficit, privatisation and land ownership) ; the internal market (basically continuing the harmonisation process) ; agriculture, transport, energy (launch of preparations for the definitive closure of unit 1 of the Ignalina nuclear plant), environment, social affairs and employment, justice and home affairs (control of frontier with Belarus, combat of money laundering) and the strengthening of administrative and judiciary capacity (in particular the management and control of EU funds). In the medium term, the measures will concern the restructuring of the banking sector and fiscal reform. In the area of the single market, the complete liberalisation of public procurement is essential, as well as continuing alignment and strengthening of customs controls. Further measures are awaited in the area of agriculture, fishing, energy (in particular, the nuclear sector), transport, environment and public administration. With regard to the programming of financial resources, the partnership confirms aid granted in line with AGENDA 2000 and the various instruments provided therein (Phare, SAPARD and ISPA) in accordance with the rules already foreseen. It should be noted that assistance is only granted if the country respects the provisions of the EC-Lithuania Association Agreement, makes progress towards satisfying the Copenhagen criteria and assures in the year 2000 the achievement of the specific priorities of this accession partnership.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

On the proposal of the Chairman of the Committee for External Relations, Mr. Elmar BROK (EPP, D) and of Mr. Patrick COX (President of the ELDR group), the conference of the presidents of the political groups in the European Parliament decided to have annual debates on enlargement as of the first plenary session of October 2000. This decision was adopted against the view of the Socialist Group, which opposed the setting of a specific calendar laying down from the present the work allocation of the various parliament committees. The decision of the Conference of presidents grants an exclusive competence to the External Relations Committee to take responsibility for the preparation of the 13 reports that will be discussed in October 2000: one report for each of the 12 candidate countries and a general report that cover all the horizontal questions. This composite report will be prepared on the basis of contributions from the other parliamentary committees on: - convergence and stability in the candidate countries; - the rule of law in the candidate countries and their adaptation to the single market; - employment and social aspects; - the environmental aspects of enlargement; - health and consumer protection; - agricultural aspects; - regional policy; - transport and tourism policy; - equal opportunities and enlargement. The other annual debates would also involve 12 reports drawn up on the basis of the regular reports of the European Commission on the progress of the candidate countries towards enlargement. As the next set of regular reports will be published by the Commission in November 2000, the second annual debate may take place before the end of the first semester of 2001.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

The committee adopted the report by Magdalene HOFF (PES, D) on Lithuania's application for membership of the EU and the state of negotiations. The report called for negotiations to be conducted in such a way as to enable Lithuania to join the first wave of enlargement. While welcoming the great strides the country had made in developing its frontier controls, the report called for effective measures to be taken to combat trafficking in human beings. The committee noted that Lithuania clearly satisfied the political criteria for EU membership but should continue the fight against corruption and broaden its approach to the fight against crime. It also said that the current timetable for the

decommissioning of the two Chernobyl-type units of the Ignalina nuclear power plant must not be relaxed. Lastly, Lithuania was encouraged to focus its economic policy on creating conditions that promote long-term growth. ?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

The European Parliament adopted the report drafted by Mrs Magdalene HOFF (PES, D) on Lithuania's application for membership of the EU and the state of negotiations. This resolution calls for negotiations to be conducted in such a way as to enable Lithuania to join the first wave of enlargement. The Parliament notes that Lithuania clearly satisfies the political criteria for EU membership, but calls on Lithuania to continue the fight against corruption and to adopt effective measures to combat trafficking in human beings. However, on the other hand, the Parliament welcomes in great strides that Lithuania has made in developing its border controls and considers that a simplified border crossing for local residents should be found. Furthermore, Lithuania is encouraged to gradually focus its economic policy on creating conditions that promote long-term growth. The Parliament also emphasises that the current timetable for the decommissioning of the two Chernobyl-type units of the Ignalina nuclear power plant must not be relaxed.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

This Regular Report for 2000 on Lithuania largely follows the same structure of the Commission's 1997 Opinion and the subsequent regular reports; however, it differs from that used in the previous years on three minor points. Firstly, part of the present report assessing Lithuania's ability to assume the obligations of membership has been structured to follow the list of 29 negotiating chapters covering the *acquis*. Secondly, this part has been broadened to cover also Lithuania's administrative capacity to apply the *acquis* under each of the negotiating chapters (previously discussed in a separate section of the report). Thirdly, the report includes, for the first time, a section assessing the progress made by Lithuania in translating the *acquis* into its official language. This report takes into consideration progress since 1999 and looks at whether intended reforms referred to in the 1999 report have been carried and also it examines new initiatives. With regard to the relations between Lithuania and the EU, it should be said that Lithuania has continued to implement the European Agreement correctly and contributed to the smooth functioning of the various joint institutions. Lithuania's trade with the EC has continued to increase. In March 1999, the Council mandated the Commission to open negotiations with the associated countries in view of new reciprocal concessions for agricultural products. The negotiations with Lithuania were concluded between negotiators in June 2000. As a consequence of the new agreement approximately three quarters of the bilateral trade of agricultural products will benefit from preferences. Negotiations were also opened in July 2000 relating to new reciprocal concessions in the field of fish and fishery products. As regards anti-dumping proceedings concerning products originating, *inter alia*, in Lithuania, it was decided, during the report period not to impose provisional anti-dumping duties on imports of certain cathode-ray colour television picture tubes and on imports of ammonium nitrate, because the dumping margins found were *de minimis*. With regard to Community aid, in the years 2000-2002 total financial assistance to Lithuania will amount annually to EUR 126 million from Phare, EUR 90 million from SAPARD, and between EUR 120 million and EUR 180 million from ISPA. Furthermore, Lithuania continues to fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria. Lithuania has made good progress in the area of public administration and the civil service. However, in continuing this reform, further issues need to be addressed, namely, the level of remuneration, additional training and improved inter-ministerial coordination. The reform of the legal system has significantly progressed with the adoption of the Civil Code and the Criminal Code. Macroeconomic stability has been preserved and it has managed to reduce the fiscal and external imbalances and state interference. Progress has also been made in the restructuring and liberalisation of the energy market, internal market, in particular with regards the free movement of goods (standardisation and market surveillance); competition (with the adoption of State aid law); taxation; audiovisual and telecommunications sectors; agriculture; environment; transport; justice and home affairs. However, as Lithuania reaches a more advanced level of alignment, greater attention needs to be paid to strengthening administrative capacity as well as further progress in areas such as financial control and judicial reform.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

The committee adopted the report by Ioannis SOULADAKIS (PES, GR) which took the view that Lithuania was making good progress and applauded the country's protection of the rights of ethnic minorities. However, the committee said that the functioning of some of Lithuania's institutions needed to be improved, notably the police and judiciary. Greater efforts should be made by both Lithuania and the EU to combat trafficking in women, and discrimination against homosexuals should be eliminated. The report said that the economic situation was good and provided an ever more solid base for long-term growth. However there were concerns about increasing unemployment, and the need to tackle the resulting social problems. The committee welcomed signs that Lithuania may take a decision on the closure date for unit 2 at the Ignalina nuclear power plant well before the end of 2004 and called for preparations for this to be stepped up. There was emphasis on Lithuania's right to determine its own security policy and support for its efforts to integrate "across the range of Euro-Atlantic security structures". Finally the report noted with satisfaction the "constructive role" played by Lithuania in enhancing cooperation with Russia in relation to the Kaliningrad region, while also calling for a strengthening of the EU's involvement in the dialogue.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

The European Parliament has adopted the report by Mr Ioannis SOULADAKIS (PES, Gr) on Lithuania's application for membership of the European Union. (Please refer to the previous text).?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

The Commission has prepared this fourth series of Regular Reports with a view to the Laeken European Council in December 2001. This Report takes into consideration progress since the 2000 Regular Report. It looks at whether intended reforms referred to in the 2000 Regular

Report have been carried out, and examines new initiatives. The Report contains a separate section examining the extent to which Lithuania has addressed the Accession Partnership priorities. With regard to the pre-accession instruments (Phare, SAPARD, ISPA), these programmes concentrate their support on the Accession Partnership priorities that help the candidate countries to fulfil the criteria for membership. For the years 2000-2002, total financial assistance to Lithuania amounts to around EUR 126 million from Phare, EUR 90 million from SAPARD and around EUR 155 million from ISPA. As regards the three main Copenhagen criteria : 1) Political Criteria : Lithuania continues to fulfil the political criteria. Lithuania has made some progress in reforming the public administration and the judiciary, where the administrative court system has been re-organised. The legal system has improved with the entry into force of the new Civil Code. The capacity to fight corruption has been strengthened. The active role of the ombudsman in the field of equal opportunities and, more recently, children's right is noteworthy. 2) Economic criteria : Lithuania is a functioning market economy. Provided that it makes further substantial efforts to continue with the vigorous implementation of its structural reform programme, it should be able to cope with the competitive pressure and market forces within the Union in the near term. Lithuania has preserved macroeconomic stability, improved the fiscal and external imbalances and reduced state interference. The privatisation of banking, other sectors and land is nearing completion. New bankruptcy and enterprise restructuring laws finally came into force. However, unemployment remains high and the structural problems on the labour markets will have to be addressed. While important laws to restructure and liberalise the energy market were adopted, further acts need to be adopted and effective implementation needs to be ensured. 3) Legislative alignment of the *acquis* : this has been accompanied by concerted efforts to strengthen administrative capacity, particularly in the financial services sector. - internal market : further progress has taken place in the area of free movement of capital, where Lithuania had already achieved a high degree of liberalisation. In the area of competition policy, the quality of the alignment achieved is reflected in an enforcement record of the Lithuanian Competition Council which has so far been reasonably successful. As regards company law, whereas good progress has been made notably in terms of legislative alignment on the protection of intellectual and industrial property rights, the effective enforcement of this legislation needs to be considerably improved. As regards taxation, Lithuania has made progress in the alignment with the *acquis* on indirect taxation and has improved the administrative capacity; - as regards agriculture : Lithuania has continued to make progress in reforming its structures in the agricultural field. However important measures remain to be taken in particular regarding the further strengthening of the land parcel identification system, the enforcement and practical application of the management mechanisms of the Common Agricultural Policy and the further preparations for the paying agency. Lithuania has continued to make progress as regards food safety and the veterinary and phyto-sanitary sectors but still needs to strengthen further the implementation structures. Limited progress has taken place as regards upgrading inspection arrangements at the external border. As regards fisheries, progress has been made, in particular in terms of administrative capacity, but significant further work is needed in terms of preparation for the structural actions and market policy; - in the area of transport : Lithuania has made good progress notably as regards road transport safety, railways restructuring and civil aviation, including strengthening of the relevant administrative capacity; - as regards the energy sector : Lithuania has achieved a reasonable level of alignment, but needs to sustain its efforts, notably in the area of the Internal Energy Market. Further work is required also in the field of nuclear energy. Lithuania must confirm and implement its closure commitments and ensure a high level of nuclear safety; - in the field of social policy : Lithuania has made steady progress in transposition and implementation of the *acquis*. However, the new Labour Code and Law on Public Health still need to be adopted. Implementation and enforcement need to be given further attention. The social dialogue needs to be reinforced. Lithuania has made further progress in the field of environment, where most of the framework legislation is in place. Implementation remains a major challenge, in particular in areas which require heavy investments or investments by private enterprises; - in the field of Justice and Home Affairs : improvements have been made in strengthening the external border and addressing shortcomings in inter-agency co-ordination. These efforts need to be sustained. Lithuania has adopted a Schengen Action Plan. 4) Administrative Capacities : in the field of regional policy and co-ordination of structural instruments, important decisions concerning the institutional structure for the management of Structural Funds have been recently taken. While continuing to pursue a prudent budgetary policy, Lithuania has made progress as regards the building of the administrative capacity which is necessary to implement and enforce the *acquis*. However, this capacity is still fragile and can easily be reduced if organisational structures are modified without careful attention. Sustained efforts are required to keep the administrative capacity acquired and to further develop it. 5) Accession Partnership : overall, Lithuania has made satisfactory progress in meeting the short-term and, to a lesser extent, the medium term priorities of the Accession Partnership. In particular Lithuania has largely met several short-term priorities concerning economic criteria, internal market, energy and environment. Some short-term priorities, notably in the field of agriculture, remain to be addressed in full. Lithuania has partially met most of the medium-term priorities, but further efforts remain to be made in particular as regards the management and control of EC funds.?

Lithuania: membership application and partnership, 8 December 1995

In line with the previous strategy papers from the Commission which aim to set out the steps to be followed for the next enlargement, the Commission has published a new general document which sets out the progress made by all of the candidate countries with regard to accession to the European Union. If, on the one hand, certain countries have made substantial progress, considerable efforts still have to be made in order to ensure the effective application of EU legislation and standards ("*acquis communautaire*") before their accession. This is why the Commission announces that it shall present an important action plan in order to help the candidate countries strengthen their institution building capacities. The negotiations are conducted on the basis of the existing *acquis*, applying the principles of own merits and catching-up. It shall continue to follow the road map (please refer to the previous Commission working document for the year 2000) and the calendar approved by the European Council, which foresees the conclusion of the negotiations with the better prepared candidate countries before the end of 2002. In this context, the Union does not create new conditions for accession, which signifies that for all the subjects to come (in particular those which have important financial implications such as agriculture, regional policy and the budget, shall be dealt with throughout the first semester of 2002), the Commission shall present negotiation proposals based on the *acquis* and the existing budgetary framework. The Commission considers that this framework provides a sufficient basis for the accession of up to 10 new Member States in 2004. The accession negotiations can be concluded independently of decisions for financing the EU after 2006. Given the present pace of negotiations and the progress made so far, the Commission should be able to make recommendations on those candidate countries ready for accession on the basis of its 2002 Regular Reports. It should also be noted that the countries which should be ready for accession on this date may be able to participate as Members of the Union in the 2004 European Parliament elections. In addition, it should be noted that the Commission's important action plan aiming to reinforce institution building should mobilise EUR 1 billion for the year 2002 alone (drawn mostly from the PHARE programme). In conclusion, the Commission announced that from November 2002, the Regular Reports that it presents shall identify which candidate countries are ready to become full Members of the European Union. The countries which do not conclude the negotiations in 2002 shall become subject to a new updated road map and eventually, a revised pre-accession strategy.?