



**11th MEETING OF EUROPEAN MINISTERS
RESPONSIBLE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
ROME, 1 DECEMBER 2003**

RESOLUTIONS

The European Ministers responsible for public administration, at their 11th meeting in Rome on 1 December 2003, also attended by the Ministers of the acceding and the candidate countries, and with the participation of the Vice-President of the European Commission,

considering that the European Council

- set in March 2000, during the Lisbon Council, the goal, for the European Union, “*to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion*”;
- emphasised, under the global strategy set out at Lisbon and in the subsequent spring meetings (Stockholm, March 2001; Barcelona, March 2002; Brussels, March 2003), in order to improve the legal environment by making it more favourable to investment, innovation and business, that the European institutions and the national Governments should, among other measures and lines of action:
 - devote particular attention to the impact of regulation;
 - implement actions to simplify the regulatory framework;
 - pursue dialogue with the public citizens and with business;
- reiterated, at the Brussels meeting on 16-17 October 2003, that “*simplifying EU legislation and improving the efficiency and transparency of public administrations will significantly strengthen economic competitiveness through encouraging business confidence and improving standards of public service*”.

noting that

- major changes will take place at the European level during the coming years because of the enlargement process and the institutional reorganisation of the European Union;

considering that

- the European Convention incorporated into the Draft Treaty instituting a Constitution for Europe that was delivered to the President of the European Council in Rome on 18 July 2003 two important articles, Article III - 185, which provides that effective national implementation of Union Law by the Member States is a matter of common interest, and urged the Union to support the efforts of Member States to improve their administrative capacity to implement Community law; and Article III-304, which states that “*in carrying out their missions, the Institutions, bodies and agencies of the Union shall have the support of an open, efficient and independent European administration*”.

declare

- their intention to pursue and enhance informal European Cooperation in the field of public administration, so that the constant exchange of information and best practices between administrations, and the performance of joint activities can foster the process of modernising the administrations at the national and European levels;
- that the reform of the European Commission is a necessity, deemed essential to give the enlarged European Union an efficient and transparent administration;
- their appreciation of the Communication of the Directors and Experts of better regulation on their past activities and on future initiatives;
- their positive assessment of the results achieved by the Italian Presidency in the present semester through specific initiatives, especially in the field of training, legislative and administrative streamlining, eGovernment, institutional communication and the quality of services delivered to citizens;

identify

- the following priorities and areas of cooperation for the work of public administrations;

approve

- the new Medium Term Programme of activities for the years 2004/2005, to be implemented within the European Cooperation in the field of Public Administration, drawn up with inputs from the European Directors-General responsible for public administration, and the Directors and Experts of better regulation.

THE PRIORITIES OF COOPERATION

- 1 The European Ministers responsible for Public Administration, in relation to the enlargement process:
 - recognise the need for European Cooperation in the field of Public Administration to pay due attention to the priorities of the administrations of

the new member States, above all in the pursuit of the common aims of modernising their administrations, improving the quality of the services delivered to their citizens and businesses, and simplifying bureaucratic procedures and rules;

- recognise the need for European Cooperation to foster greater rationalisation and a more uniform application of Community law, supporting its effective implementation, in a Europe enlarged, for the moment, to 25 members.

2 As far as the process of the institutional reorganisation of the European Union is concerned through the adoption of the new Treaty which will strengthen the Union as a union of citizens and member States, the European Ministers responsible for Public Administration:

- recognise the need for their respective administrations and the European institutions to be more efficient and transparent, offering their users, citizens and businesses, new possibilities for participation, in application of the principle of subsidiarity;
- acknowledge, in particular, the need to regularly and properly inform the citizens on the work of both their national public administrations and, in their capacity as European citizens, of those of the European Union, and advocate that this need is advanced at all levels, including the highest possible levels;
- acknowledge that the improved efficiency of public administrations achieved above all by improving the quality of regulation, that has already begun within the framework of the Lisbon Process, must also be strengthened to improve economic coordination, fair competition, social cohesion and to manage, and where possible reduce, administrative costs.

3 The European Ministers responsible for Public Administration, also in the light of the Como Ministerial Declaration on eGovernment of 8 July 2003, acknowledge the importance of using new technologies and of implementing eGovernment for the objectives mentioned above. Stressing the key role of the human resources in this field, they reiterate the importance of:

- fully implementing the principle of subsidiarity between different tiers of government and in guaranteeing the full and satisfactory governance of the system at European, domestic, regional and local public level;
- improving the quality of services which the public administrations deliver to the citizens and to business.

4 The European Ministers responsible for Public Administration, faced with the new demands imposed by the growth and development of the Union, emphasise the importance of training civil servants as an essential means of enhancing the efficiency, the effectiveness and the quality of public administration and underline the importance of initiatives for exchange of experience between senior level executive officers, and of joint and/or open training seminars for civil servants.

AREAS OF COOPERATION

The European Ministers responsible for Public Administration recommend that these priorities must be achieved by taking appropriate actions, particularly in the following fields of cooperation, set out in the Medium Term Programme annexed to this Resolution.

Innovative public services

Innovation in the field of public services should meet the demand of citizens and business: a growing demand for quality in exchange for the scarcer resources given to public administrations. Citizens and business also request improved communications and greater participation and transparency in the administrative decision-making process, both nationally and at the European level.

Human resource management

The modernisation of public administrations and the improvement of the quality of the services cannot take place without improving the quality of the management of the human resources and without enhancing the value of human capital mainly through motivation and training.

eGovernment

Full use must be made of the new technologies in public administration, for which the dissemination of successful experiences may prove useful to guarantee cost-effectiveness, standardisation and the success of future initiatives.

Better regulation

The economic and social growth objectives and the proper functioning of the internal market require action to be taken to constantly improve the quality of regulation, among other things, by disseminating and improving the use of such instruments as regulatory impact analysis, consultation and the streamlining of regulations and procedures. The Ministers of Public Administration reaffirm their wish for the setting up of an ad hoc horizontal working party on better regulation reporting to the Council, through Coreper, in accordance with Article 207 of the Treaty, with a view to assisting in the follow-up of the Commission's Action Plan "Simplifying and Improving the Regulatory Environment".

Social dialogue

Social dialogue, within the framework of the Cooperation, is essential for a constant and profitable exchange of information with European trade union organisations. In this connection the meetings of the Directors General of the Troika with the European trade union organisations are appropriate ways. The Directors general will discuss the results of the representativity study in order to put forward possible proposals to the Ministers for follow-ups to the findings of the study; Ministers will take decisions upon these proposals.