



**REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**  
**FORTY FOURTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

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**DECISION**

**ON ADOPTION OF A POSITION OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON THE DRAFT  
PROGRAMME OF THE BULGARIAN PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
EUROPEAN UNION  
(1 JANUARY – 30 JUNE 2018)**

The National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, pursuant to art. 86 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria,

*Led* by the belief that the first Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union provides the Republic of Bulgaria with the opportunity to strengthen its role in setting the EU agenda and in cooperation with the other Member States and European institutions to work for the common interest, in response to citizens' expectations of a secure, solidarity-based, united and social Europe;

*Regarding* the Presidency of the Council of the European Union as a major national task which may support Bulgaria's positive image of a well-prepared, constructive and fair mediator in the forthcoming key European debates;

*Recognising* the strengthened role of national parliaments following the Treaty of Lisbon in the formation and implementation of the main priorities on the European agenda;

*Stressing* the importance of the Parliamentary Dimension of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU for its successful holding and expressing its readiness to interact with the government on all major issues and planned initiatives;

*Recalling* again the stated commitment and the pursued policy of seeking and reaching agreement and unity among the political forces represented in the Parliament on the issues of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the EU under the conditions of transparency and accountability of the Bulgarian participation in the EU decision-making process,

**HAS DECIDED:**

1. Expresses its general support to the priorities stated in the draft Programme of the Republic of Bulgaria's Presidency of the Council of the EU, sharing the main messages about consensus, competitiveness and cohesion, and the slogan "United we stand strong"



2. Proposes to the Bulgarian government, when adopting the final Programme, to take into consideration the following topics identified by the National Assembly as short-term and long-term priorities of the EU and Bulgaria:

### *2.1. European Budget, Cohesion Policy, Common Agricultural Policy*

- the EU Multiannual Financial Framework for the period after 2020 should ensure retention of the EU successful policies, leading to the accomplishment of the Union's strategic objectives of cohesion, increased competitiveness, economic growth and creation of quality jobs, social progress and poverty alleviation;
- retaining the Cohesion Policy as one of the main tools for achieving economic and social convergence, with fair allocation of the funds among Member States; a constructive approach to the regional policy through differentiated complementing of the grants for lagging regions with financial instruments;
- reinforcing the Common Agricultural Policy as a strong and adequately financed community policy, preserving the Single Area Payment Scheme and production-based support to ensure sustainable development of such a key sector of the European economy.

### *2.2. Defense, Security and Migration*

- reaching consent on finalising the Common European Asylum System reform, including by adopting a revised Dublin Regulation, focusing on the application of targeted measures for preventing illegal migration and human trafficking;
- prioritising the fight against organised crime and terrorism through better cooperation and information and data exchange among the national security services of the Member States and adoption of a new legal framework for the operation of the Schengen Information System;
- active role of Bulgaria in the efforts to strengthen the cooperation and develop an efficient defence policy aimed at increasing the security of the EU and its citizens; ongoing commitment for solidarity-based support to the Member States at the EU's external borders, including for strengthening border control; support for adoption of a European Defence Industrial Development Programme and promoting participation in projects under the European Defence Fund.

### *2.3. European Social Model. Education, Youth and Culture.*

- support for the development of the European Pillar of Social Rights and its three elements: equal opportunities and access to the labour market; fair working conditions; social protection and inclusion;



- retention and development of existing mechanisms for addressing poverty and social exclusion, incl. the European Social Fund;
- efforts in finalising the negotiations on the revision of the Posting of Workers Directive, taking into account to the greatest possible extent the interests of the countries with lower than EU average pay in the most sensitive sectors and securing the free movement of people;
- enhancing the coordination regarding health care issues;
- linking the complex subject of the future of labour to the support of entrepreneurship and job creation, focusing on the measures for increasing youth employment through quality education and creation of skills demanded in the modern economy;
- support for European-wide educational programmes, measures and initiatives in the forthcoming negotiations under the Multiannual Financial Framework, including the “Erasmus+” Programme which has proved its role and contribution to improving the quality of education and learning in the EU, promoting mobility and active citizenship;
- reinforcing culture as one of the main drivers of the development of the European Union, for restoring citizens’ confidence in the European project and adhering to the EU values in response to the growing divide and in order to address the rising radical anti-European movements; raising awareness of the objectives, initiatives and events associated with the “European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018”.

#### *2.4. Competitive Economy, Digital Market*

- efforts to speed up the process of further elaboration of the Digital Single Market in order to enhance the competitiveness of the European economy, boost economic growth and increase the opportunities of users for efficient Internet use;
- creating conditions for network and information security and privacy regulation;
- creating adequate financing instruments in support of small and medium-sized enterprises, reducing administrative burdens as a precondition for implementation of the Startup and Scale up initiative;

#### *2.5. Enlargement and Regional Cooperation*

- giving a new impetus to the process of enlargement of the European Union to the Western Balkan countries as a guarantee to stability, economic development and social progress both in South East Europe and across the European continent as a whole, by taking concrete steps and initiatives: support for the reforms in the candidate countries for



faster compliance with the membership criteria; greater inclusion of the countries from the region in the accomplishment of the EU strategic objectives; a strong focus on the connectivity among the candidate countries and among the candidate countries and the Member States from the region in all its aspects – transport, energy, economy, communications, digital, facilitation of people-to-people contacts;

- adopting a final document of the Western Balkans summit in Sofia which should confirm the political will of the European Union for accession of the Western Balkan countries and making efforts for the final document to be accompanied by an elaborate Road Map with concrete initiatives, commitments and indicative deadlines for their implementation;
- enhancing the visibility of the Black Sea Region, including by increasing the interconnection with the Danube Region and the full use of the potential and instruments of the EU macro-regional strategies;
- applying the deliverables of the Fifth Eastern Partnership Summit aimed at building a democratic, stable, prosperous and sustainable area in the Eastern Partnership countries as one of the priorities of the EU and the Presidency Trio – Estonia, Bulgaria, Austria.

3. Encourages the Bulgarian government to work towards the adoption of balanced decisions in order to preserve the unity among EU Member States and implement the strategic priorities of the European Union while focusing its efforts on achieving specific results during the 6-month Presidency period.

4. The ministers shall inform the parliamentary committees on a regular basis of the progress in the implementation of the priorities of the Bulgarian Presidency and the results of the meetings of the European Council shall be presented to the National Assembly.

5. The Programme of the Bulgarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union shall be presented to the National Assembly following its adoption by the Council of Ministers.

01.12.2017