Resolution on the proposed ILO convention supplemented by a recommendation on domestic workers

2011/2678(RSP) - 12/05/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 11 May 2011, the European Parliament adopted by 517 votes to 64 with 14 abstentions a resolution tabled by the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs welcoming the ILO initiative to adopt a convention supplemented by a recommendation on decent work for domestic workers.

It calls on the EU countries which are members of the ILO to adopt these instruments at the ILO Conference in June 2011, and on EU Member States to ratify and implement the convention and recommendation quickly. It notes that the aim of the convention is to provide legal recognition for domestic work as work, extend rights to all domestic workers and to prevent violations and abuses so as to provide a legal framework for all domestic workers and ensure that their work does not take place outside the regulatory framework.

Parliament considers that the adoption, ratification and implementation of this convention on decent work for domestic workers:

- can have an impact by reducing the numbers of working poor;
- would address the needs of one of the most vulnerable categories of worker;
- would not only improve the position of the large number of women on the labour market for domestic work by guaranteeing them decent working conditions, but would also enhance their degree of social inclusion.

Members call for the provision of broader access to readily available and affordable high-quality childcare and elderly-care facilities, thus helping to ensure that workers are not forced to undertake these duties on an informal basis, and they also stress the need to ensure that **precarious domestic care jobs are transformed**, wherever possible, into decent, well-paid sustainable jobs.

They note that many employers of domestic workers themselves lack understanding or appropriate advice and assistance as regards labour law, social security and the obligations of employers of domestic workers. Parliament calls for the development of a **campaign for a step-by-step transformation of precarious workers** into regular workers, and the endorsement of a programme aiming to educate workers on the impacts of precarious work, including the occupational health and safety implications.

It believes that using **best practice from certain regions or Member States**, e.g. model contracts, could provide more stable forms of employment for domestic workers employed in family homes. Members note that the trend towards an increase in the proportion of non-standard or atypical contracts has a strong gender and generational dimension and that this should be acknowledged in the text of the convention and recommendation. It takes the view that it might be necessary to adapt legislation to create flexible and secure contractual arrangements which guarantee equal treatment.

With regard to the fact that domestic work sector is characterised by a high level of informality and **undeclared work**, Parliament states that combating undeclared work should be accompanied by measures to create viable and sustainable employment alternatives and to support people in accessing the open labour market, including through genuine self-employment.