Broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and European Community for 1995

1995/2118(COS) - 13/07/1995

Mr COX (ELDR, IRL) regretted that the debate on the annual economic guidelines was taking place after their adoption by the Council and he highlighted a number of serious gaps, such as the policy on employment and unemployment in particular. To this end, he estimated that 3 million new jobs created in 1995-1996 would only reduce the unemployment figure by 1.6 million (compared with the 5.8 million job losses recorded between 1992 and 1994). He thus hoped that a more focused policy would place greater emphasis on employment with a view to achieving results that lived up to expectations. Mr DE SILGUY considered that as a result of the COX report, following the adoption of the broad economic guidelines on 10 July by the Ecofin Council, the Member States could take account of the EU's reference framework when drawing up their national budgets. As regards job creation, which was the aim of all economic policies, the Commission proposed, in particular, improving the quality of human resources, strengthening the employment component of growth, and facilitating the reintegration of workers, particularly the long-term unemployed and young people. The EP was to be consulted formally on the adoption of the Commission's summary report in October based on the multiannual programmes provided at the end of September by the Member States (with a view to establishing a European employment strategy at the Madrid Council). The Commission had also asked the European Council to approve the launch of specific projects involving SMEs and local initiatives. The policies on training would be dealt with in a Commission White Paper in the autumn. As far as growth was concerned, the 1995-2000 expansionist programme would cut unemployment to 7.25% in the year 2000, which should prompt the implementation of structural measures since the ambitions in the Delors White Paper were far from being achieved. Growth continued to be threatened by monetary disruptions, inflation in the countries with weak currencies, debt and public deficits; the Commission therefore called for greater convergence. Finally, the Commission proposed strengthening the multilateral monitoring procedures.