Broad guidelines of the economic policies of the Member States and the Community for 2001

2001/2081(COS) - 05/06/2001

The Council, following a debate on some specific issues, agreed on the text of the report on the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs) 2001 to be transmitted to the Göteborg European Council for political endorsement by the Heads of State and Government. Immediately after endorsement by the European Council, the Council will formally adopt the BEPGs at a special session in Göteborg. The 2001 BEPGs confirm the existing policy strategy, in particular in relation to achieving the new strategic goal agreed on at the Lisbon European Council, and extended further in light of the results of the Stockholm European Council, 23-24 March 2001. In Stockholm it was emphasised that the Union and the Member States are fully committed to the goal of full employment and see it as an important way of meeting the challenge of ageing populations. It was also stressed that the promotion of sustainable development should be integrated in the 2001 Broad Economic Policy Guidelines. The latter has been drawn up against the background of the examination of the implementation of the 2000 BEPGs and the assessment of the economic situation and outlook as presented in the Commission's Spring 2001 economic forecasts. This year's Guidelines put great emphasis on continuing on the course of reform which includes ambitious targets for reforms of product and capital markets as well as for raising employment rates. They also stress the need to further strengthen public finances in most Member States, not least to meet the challenges of ageing populations. Among the specific questions discussed were the need for an appropriate framework for energy taxation at the European level and for the realisation of an internal market for energy.