Social protection in Europe. 1995 Report

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Social protection is a fundamental part of the European social model. It inspires confidence, promotes social cohesion and helps create a sense of community among Europeans. There is widespread agreement that the completion of the Single Market and the conclusion of economic and monetary union (EMU) should not be deleterious to social protection. The Economic and Social Committee's response to the problems raised by the Commission should be, as in 1992, that there are real arguments in favour of the development of a more dynamic European Union strategy for promoting convergence in social protection. This convergence should be based on the basic goals already contained in the Treaty and in the welfare-state traditions of the Member States, and should be confirmed by the international norms these countries have accepted. They should shore up and enhance social cohesion and prevent regressive policies from dragging everything down to the lowest common denominator. What future for social protection in Europe? - Adapting social protection to the employment situation - Backing developments in working practices - Promoting the European labour market - Promoting developments in on-going training - Transforming passive expenditure on unemployment into active expenditure - What financial benefits should accrue from solidarity? - How can financing through personal effort be arranged? - Promoting family policy - The risk of dependence, given an ageing population - Social protection and the free movement of people - Social protection in Europe and freedom to provide services - Social protection in Europe and the free movement of goods - Health services in Europe