

Lifelong education and training. Memorandum

2001/2088(COS) - 18/09/2001

The committee adopted the report by Kathleen VAN BREMPT (PES, B) on the Commission memorandum. While supporting the Commission's strategy of initiating a broad social debate on lifelong learning, MEPs called for concrete policy measures to be based on the following principles: democratisation and equality, individual personality development, the individual right to lifelong learning, personal responsibility and a holistic approach to learning. The committee noted that lifelong learning may require a radical change in policy on education, training and the labour market. It pointed out that supporting measures may be needed such as the recognition and certification of experience and abilities acquired in informal learning contexts and recognition for experience acquired abroad. The report also stressed the importance of adequate funding to promote and set up lifelong learning programmes (under the ESF, ERDF, Structural Funds, EIB, etc.) and of redistributing financial resources in order to promote lifelong education and training. MEPs said that the efforts of the Union, the Member States and the regions must be aligned by the open coordination method. The Commission was urged to announce by the end of 2001 the action plan that it envisaged in this area and to involve the European Parliament in its deliberations. The social partners were called upon to ensure that binding agreements were reached regarding the right to lifelong learning at European level. Lastly the committee advocated measures to promote lifelong learning at individual level and supported in this context the system of "individual learning accounts" as used, for example, in the UK and Sweden.