

# Employment: guidelines for member States' policies for the year 2002

2001/0208(CNS) - 12/09/2001 - Legislative proposal

**PURPOSE** : to present the 2002 employment guidelines. **CONTENT** : These proposals for the Employment Guidelines will be the fifth annual version since the extraordinary Luxembourg Summit on employment in 1997, and the third in accordance with Article 128 of the Treaty. Member States must take these guidelines into account in shaping their employment policies, and report on their implementation in 2002 in order to prepare the next annual cycle of the "Luxembourg process". Sound macro-economic policies, appropriate wage developments and structural reforms in line with the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines, and a determined implementation of the Employment Guidelines based on the four pillars of Employability, Entrepreneurship, Adaptability and Equal Opportunities, are needed in order to make the necessary further progress. Following the in-depth changes which marked the Employment Guidelines for 2001, the results of which will be reflected in the Employment Guidelines for 2003, the Commission recommends a minor revision of the Guidelines, keeping the changes to new policy emphases. The Stockholm European Council agreed to complement the Lisbon Targets for 2010 with intermediate targets for 2005 for the overall employment rate (67%) and the employment rate for women (57%), as well as a target of 50% for the employment rate of older persons (55-64) to be reached in 2010. These targets have been incorporated in the horizontal objective A. The Stockholm European Council also agreed that the Council should include quality in work as a general objective in the 2002 Guidelines. This is now reflected in a new horizontal objective B. In addition, new references to the quality aspect have been integrated in a number of relevant thematic guidelines. Guideline 6 on mobility underlines more strongly the need to encourage labour mobility in new European labour markets. In view of the limited response made by Member States to the invitation to set national targets for employment rates in accordance with the Lisbon summit conclusions, the wording of horizontal objective A has been reinforced in a more binding way. The significant gap in pay between men and women in many Member States has been identified as a potential disincentive for women to take up work or to remain at work. In addition to the renewal of Recommendations in this area due to insufficient responses, this calls for a strengthening of Guideline 17 on gender gaps.