# Employment: guidelines for Member States' policies, review. Employment package

2003/0068(CNS) - 14/01/2003 - Document attached to the procedure

PURPOSE : to outline a new European Employment Strategy. CONTENT : the European Commission has adopted the outline of a new, more operational European Employment Strategy to confront new challenges such as faster economic change, ageing populations and enlargement. The Commission has proposed three basic objectives for the future strategy, in line with the Lisbon reform agenda: full employment, the promotion of quality and productivity at work (better jobs) and fostering cohesion and an inclusive labour market. Specific priorities, to be supported wherever possible by quantified targets, will inter alia include: getting women (back) into work, helping older workers to stay in work and making work pay. The Commission also proposes better governance of the strategy, especially through more involvement of social partners and civil society and streamlining of the strategy with other EU policy coordination processes such as the broad economic policy guidelines. Central to the proposed approach are three overarching objectives: - full employment, in line with the Lisbon strategy targets; - quality and productivity at work, reflecting the need for better jobs in a knowledge-based economy and the need to promote EU competitiveness; - cohesion and an inclusive labour market, so as to reduce existing disparities in access to the labour market. Responding to the Barcelona summit's request for simpler and more effective guidelines, and in line with the need to streamline the various EU policy coordination processes, the Commission now proposes simpler guidelines which would be defined with a time horizon of 2010 and remain stable until a mid-term review to take place in 2006. More emphasis will be put on results: monitoring the implementation of the guidelines by Member States. The communication proposes a more concentrated set of priorities for the future guidelines which follow the Lisbon objectives: helping those without a job into work and making work pay, fostering entrepreneurship to create more and better jobs, combating undeclared work, promoting active ageing, managing immigration, promoting adaptability on the labour market, investment in human capital and life-long learning, gender equality, supporting integration and combating discrimination on the labour market for people at a disadvantage, and helping address regional employment disparities. The Commission also proposes that the governance of the strategy should be improved through more effective delivery services, strong involvement of social partners, mobilisation of all relevant actors and adequate financial support. The presentation of concrete objectives, priorities and targets will offer the basis for an open discussion with all interested parties, especially the Member States, the European Parliament, representative organisations of the social partners and civil society. In line with the new and streamlined approach for the overall follow up of the Lisbon agenda, the Commission will, in April 2003, make a formal proposal for employment guidelines and recommendations in the light of this debate and of the general political guidance issued by the EU's Spring Summit.