Union rights

1996/2131(INI) - 03/03/1998

The Committee adopted an own-initiative report by Ria OOMEN-RUIJTEN (EPP, NL) on transnational trade union rights. However, full consensus could not be found on this tricky and delicate issue (17 in favour, 4 against, 2 abstentions). The minority of the Committee argued that the whole issue should remain in the hands of the labour market organizations. The report suggests that it is necessary to enshrine the right of free association in the Treaty on European Union. European employees' and employers' organizations should be given an explicit right to engage in collective bargaining at European level. The right to collective action (e.g. strikes, lockouts) should be a corollary to the right to collective bargaining. According to the report, management and labour organization should draw up proposals for negotiating rules and principles, including the appropriate instruments to avoid labour disputes. In addition, different types of conciliation procedures would be necessary to facilitate the resolution of transnational conflicts.