Worker information and consultation

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The committee, chaired by Mr HUGHES (PSE, UK), adopted the report by Mr MENRAD (PPE, D), on the Commission communication on worker information and consultation. Given that this was an opportunity to help unblock various European legislative procedures on the information, consultation, participation and codetermination of workers, the committee supported the Commission's efforts to restart the debate on the European Company and the European Cooperative. The committee welcomed the action by the high-level panel of experts in charge of clarifying the de jure and de facto state of information in the Member States in the light of a comparative study. It expected the Commission to present framework conditions for worker participation based on the conclusions of the high-level panel of experts if negotiations broke down between the social partners. It hoped that these conditions would be flexible enough to enable the procedures and rules on participation and codetermination to be defined at branch or corporate level. Furthermore, defining rights of participation in the economic activities of companies could not involve transferring a specific model of codetermination existing in one Member State to another Member State. If a national model was not to be "exported", neither must the adoption of a European statute result in companies being able to use a European legal instrument to avoid codetermination. The Commission was called on to draw up without delay a proposal for a directive on minimum standards for the information and consultation of workers in their firms in the Member States and to pursue its measures aimed at evaluating and hence improving the implementation of Council directives in this field with a view to making consultation with the social partners more binding.