Social dialogue at European level

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The Committee adopted a report by Helwin PETER (PES, D) on the Commission recommendation "Adapting and promoting social dialogue on the Community level" which calls for provisions governing access by both sides of industry to social dialogue and their role in it. According to the Committee, it is important to clarify the role of the European social partners in the light of attainment of EMU and its impact on macroeconomic and wages policy as well as the organisation and financing of social security. The Committee also called for interinstitutional negotiations about the role of the European Parliament in the legislative procedure following the incorporation of the Agreement on Social Policy in the Amsterdam Treaty. Parliament should get equal status with the Council in social legislation initiated by social partners. The Committee had doubts about the usefulness of the advisory committees which are to assist the social partners during negotiations under the Agreement on Social Policy. However, the upgrading of sectoral dialogue by setting up new committees was seen as a positive step. The Committee also gave its support to the reform of the Standing Committee on Employment. While the Committee found it necessary to reduce the number of participants in the Standing Committee, it was not willing to accept the Commission proposal of 16 members. With 24 members the Standing Committee on Employment would be able to work more efficiently.