Social protection in Europe. Report 1997

1998/2088(COS) - 23/02/1999

The Committee adopted a report by Bartho PRONK (EPP, NL) commenting the Commission report on Social protection in Europe 1997. In the report, Mr. PRONK calls on the Commission to set in motion a process of voluntary alignment of objectives and policies in the field of social protection following the model of the European employment strategy. The Commission should present an action plan which * analyses the effects of the different social protection systems on competitiveness in the internal market; * sets out the correlation between increased productivity and the evolution of social welfare systems; * identifies loopholes in taxation and social protection systems; * defines the criteria for benchmarking; * presents a code of conduct for avoiding harmful competition via welfare systems; * proposes minimum standards for certain areas of social protection; and * presents guidelines for determining an acceptable minimum income in the Member States. The report suggests that the Commission should examine how individual entitlements can be implemented. The Council should include in the employment policy guidelines specific targets for the creation of child care and other care facilities.