European Year of People with Disabilities 2003

2001/0116(CNS) - 23/10/2001

The committee adopted the report by Elizabeth LYNNE (ELDR, UK) approving the proposal under the consultation procedure, subject to a number of amendments. It called on the Commission to submit a proposal on a specific disability directive based on Article 13 of the Treaty (combating discrimination) as well as a proposal for a specific action programme for disabled people beginning in 2004 to ensure the continuation of work done during the 2003 European Year of Disabilities and the coordination of disability policies among the Member States. The committee called for the budget for the European Year to be EUR 15m. Community-wide measures should be subsidised up to 90% instead of 80% as proposed by the Commission. Other (i.e. local, regional. etc.) measures should be subsidised up to 60% instead of 50%. The report also said that all relevant actors, such as NGOs, charitable organisations, all types of organisations of disabled people and the social partners, should be involved in the European Year. Among the committee's other recommendations was the idea of holding a major conference on discrimination and disability, which would focus on implementing common rules at EU level on access to all public buildings and places. Finally, MEPs emphasised the need for a clear evaluation of the European Year. The follow-up report submitted by the Commission should be written in clear and simple language and in accessible formats for all disabled people.