Living and working in the information society: people first. Green Paper

1996/2170(COS) - 11/03/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Wim van VELZEN (PSE, NL) on the Commission's Green Paper Parliament called on the Commission to draw up an action programme on the social impact of the information society which was as complete and balanced as possible. Taking the view that the Green Paper concentrated on work, jobs and the competitiveness of the economy and placed the human dimension of the information society in second place, the report considered that the convergence criteria and the stability pact made it particularly difficult to achieve a social equilibrium. It called therefore on the Commission and the Member States to draw up a framework for a reduction of working time and a better distribution of work and more scope for training. The Commission was called on to submit before the end of the year a proposal on teleworking and associated problems concerning social security, health and safety, privacy and taxation. It was also called on to intensify its efforts to draw up a European fiscal policy in order to reduce the current burden of tax on labour and to develop new forms of taxation in the light of the global information society. Parliament emphasized that access to the networks was of prime importance and that non-discrimination, interoperability, protection of privacy and non-impediment by language differences should be considered as basic principles. The report suggested the launching of a computer literacy campaign in which young people familiar with computers pass on their knowledge to the rest of the population, in particular young unemployed persons, immigrants, housewives and the elderly. The Commission and the Member States should consider the concept of a diploma with 'maintenance contract' enabling persons completing a course of study to update their know-how and skills at regular intervals. In general Parliament considered that a study should be undertaken on the impact of introducing new technologies into education for different age groups.