The demographic situation in the European Union. 1995 Report

1996/2033(COS) - 14/03/1997 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs J. BOOGERD-QUAAK (ELDR, NL) Parliament called on the Commission to develop a new vision of the role of the European Union in the world and suggested that the Member States incorporated the demographic factor in their annual employment reports to the Council. Parliament also commented on a number of points concerning the problems and consequences of demographic changes in Europe: - with regard to the labour market, Parliament called on the Member States and the Council to redefine their economic and social policies in the light of the impact of demographic developments in order to: . increase participation of women in the labour market, . extend the retention of older workers in the labour market, . improve access to the labour market by immigrants. It also called on the Commission to: . establish a research programme on technology and ageing (gerotechnology) to ensure that the elderly remain a benefit rather than a burden to society, . present a study and proposals concerning the effects on employment of tax reforms, notably the shift from labour to other tax bases. - with regard to social security and pensions, it called on Member States to redefine their pension schemes to take account of demographic changes while safeguarding the principle of solidarity between the generations. It called on the Commission to assess the impact of demographic factors on the financial equilibrium of social security. Supporting the conclusions of the report by Mrs Veil on supplementary pensions, Parliament called on the social partners to base their collective bargaining, considering new career patterns, on a different relationship between productivity and remuneration and new methods of recruiting and selecting adapted to the labour market and an ageing working population. - with regard to health care, Parliament called on the Member States to promote the development of innovative and cost-efficient forms of care and to develop a social system of care and assistance for the elderly which correspond to the demographic needs of the future. - with regard to regional imbalances, Parliament called on the Member States to take account of demographic trends in their planning and called on the Commission to submit a detailed study of the demographic situation of the regions of the Union. It also called, in its revision of the structural funds, for regional imbalances to be given due consideration and to incorporate the demographic aspect in the post-1999 framework for the Funds. - with regard to the birth rate, it called on Member States to promote measures to reconcile family and work. Lastly it urged Member States to take account of the need of the elderly for education, culture and leisure activities and called on the Commission to update EU demographic data regularly.