Union rights

1996/2131(INI) - 02/07/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mrs Ria OOMEN-RUIJTEN (PPE, NL) on transnational trade union rights in the European Union, the European Parliament took the view that ILO Conventions Nos 87 and 98 and the European Social Charter of the Council of Europe, which established freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining at international level, must be applied at Community level. It considered that the coordinated implementation of employment policy and Economic and Monetary Union would provide an impetus for the process of European collective bargaining, and called on the Commission to do everything in its power to apply the ILO Conventions at Community level. It called for fundamental transnational trade unions rights (right of association including the right of collective bargaining and trade union action) to be enshrined in the Treaty on European Union. These rights should include sufficient protection of employees in case they are put at a disadvantage when they enter a trade union or are active in trade unions, and free participation in trade union organisations in enterprises. Parliament stressed that social consensus was an essential condition for ensuring sustained social and economic development, and considered that trade union organisations should be involved in establishing trade union rights at European level. It called on management and labour to enter into dialogue on the creation of appropriate instruments to avoid collective labour disputes and to draw up proposals for negotiating rules and principles. It called on the Commission to have an investigation carried out by the end of 1998 into how management and labour could best establish contractual relations or agreements. It announced that, when holding its annual debate on the Social Charter, it would devote part of the proceedings to the extension of trade union rights at Community level.