

Employment in Europe. 1996 annual Report

1996/2202(COS) - 28/11/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Friedrich WOLF (Greens), Parliament welcomed the Commission's Employment in Europe - 1996 report, while regretting the limited progress and the absence of a common position on the deterioration of the quality of employment, action to combat mass unemployment - in particular long-term unemployment - and social exclusion. It therefore called on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to focus both macro-economic and structural policies at national and European level on the fight against unemployment taking full account of the following policy recommendations: - a less restrictive monetary policy; - a reasonable - growth-oriented - approach to budgetary discipline; - an investment policy which stimulates public and private investment; - a taxation policy and social welfare structures which act as an incentive to employment creation; - an active education, training and re-training policy at Community and national level particularly in high technology sectors. Parliament considered that the priority of coordination between macro-economic and labour market policies has to be strengthened with a view to lowering the non-direct cost of labour at the lower end of the wage scale, provided that this reduction is brought into balance with other forms of funding (for example indirect taxation or taxation on energy consumption). Moreover, Member States should promote measures that facilitate self-employment and the creation of SMUs, especially in areas of social, cultural and ecological innovation. Special attention should be given to young persons, the long-term unemployed, women and older workers. Parliament appealed to the two sides of industry, the Member States and the Union to take measures to promote part-time work, sabbaticals, paid leave for continuing education and training and other forms of reductions in working time, without the competitive position of undertakings or the social protection of employees suffering as a result. It also called for measures with a view to creating employment in the peripheral and island regions of the EU. Parliament considered investment in human resources a vital component of the employment strategy and called for Community support not only for the development of skills and human resources but also for greater investment in undertakings that respect the environment. Finally, it invited the Member States to agree, within the framework of the IGC, the addition of a new chapter on the employment policy of the Union and the Member States in the new Treaty.