Community structural policy and employment

1996/2057(COS) - 28/11/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Carlos LAGE (PSE, P), Parliament strongly supported all measures of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) to increase or maintain employment, but it noted that despite the increase in economic growth, the impact of Community structural policies on employment is still insufficient. It therefore proposed that, new projects for 1997-99 are defined, particular attention should be given to investments which create permanent and socially sustainable jobs. The European Parliament considered that the impact of the Structural Funds on employment could be increased if the Commission were to: - develop specific measures aimed at ameliorating the situation in large towns; - support greater flexibility in working hours; - improve working conditions and the recognition of certain occupations; - take steps to fund European networks. It recommended that fuller use be made of opportunities for creating jobs, whether traditional (such as local products and cultural activities) or new (personal, social and environmental services) and considered it particularly necessary to: - improve Community policies to support SMUs; - improve the balance between support for fixed capital and investment in human resources; - improve access to education and vocational training both for young people and for adults; - implement special measures to support women (training unemployed women, reorganizing working time, SMUs managed by women); - aid the development of services targeted at business and local knowledge; - give positive consideration to productive investment in the area of R&D and innovation; - give more support to the cultural and tourism sectors and to activities of an ecological nature and those linked to the environment; - greater emphasis to be placed on the use of the Structural Funds for the development of infrastructure and services to assist dependent people. Finally, the European Parliament called on the Commission to elicit greater sympathy for labour-intensive programmes from Monitoring Committee representatives and to finance, under the ESF Regulation, a programme of seminars and exchanges of information.