Social policy: scoreboard on implementing the agenda

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The European Parliament adopted the resolution by Mrs Marie-Thérèse HERMANGE (EPP-ED, F). However, it regrets that the first scoreboard was, owing to the very tight deadlines, submitted to the Stockholm European Council before Parliament had the opportunity to consider it and it calls on the Commission to forward to Parliament the annual scoreboard in good time for it to deliver an opinion in advance of the spring European Council. It considers that the scoreboard should make operational the policy initiatives announced in the social policy agenda by specifying in respect of each component the relevant policy instrument (legislation, open coordination, negotiations by the social partners, etc), individual or body responsible, and the deadlines fixed. It asks the Commission to adhere systematically to that structure when drawing up its next scoreboard. In addition, the Parliament considers that the social policy agenda should be based on a dynamic approach aimed at making continuous adjustments between objectives laid down and progress achieved. The resolution calls for the European Parliament to be closely involved in the taking of decisions on such indicators and to have the opportunity to play a role in the new coordination processes (including the open method of coordination in the areas of employment, social inclusion, education and training, and pensions) and calls for an interinstitutional agreement to be concluded in this connection. Moreover, it expresses its concern at the lack of progress achieved through the European social dialogue, and hopes that the social partners, and especially employers, will participate more actively in achieving the objectives laid down, including, in particular, in the areas of training and lifelong learning, organisation of work and adjustment to new forms of work and the reconciling of work and private life. Parliament takes the view that the Commission should come forward with legislative instruments whenever negotiations are not concluded within a reasonable period of time. More specifically, it calls on the Commission to supply information on how it proposes to act on those requirements in particular: - to define an appropriate legal basis for the development of the civil dialogue and to provide for the necessary financing to enable the NGOs to contribute to the European social agenda; - to provide a tax and legislative framework for the development of the social economy (third sector); - to integrate the social dimension into competition policy by including considerations related to employment and industrial relations in Commission decisions concerning mergers of companies; - to put in place at European level the right to take collective action, and in particular the right to strike; - to submit a directive on social security cover for new forms of employment; - to reinforce the action programme and instruments against poverty and social exclusion; - to submit a proposal to amend Directive 92/85/EEC1 on the introducion of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and the health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have just given birth or are breastfeeding along the lines of theproposals set out its resolution of 6 July 20002, in particular on the length of maternity leave; - to launch an initiative aimed at better guaranteeing the social quality of work by improving the balance between working life and family life by restructuring working hours on the basis of arrangements to be negotiated between the social partners; - to propose an action plan to give the aged and the disabled access to working life and to the information society, as well as the definition of criteria for recognising a disability; - to take initiatives and submit an action plan designed to effectively prevent musculoskeletal injuries at work; - to take initiatives to provide appropriate safeguards for workers' rights, and notably employment, in the event of the restructuring or relocation of undertakings; - to take initiatives, and notably adopt an action plan, to put into practice equality of pay for men and women; - to submit a proposal concerning individual dismissals; The Commission is called upon to speed up its operations, in particular as regards legislative proposals and preparatory work; calls in particular on the Commission: - to submit a proposal for a review of Directive 94/45/EC on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees as soon as possible so that the legislative procedure can be concluded, as intended, before the end of 2002; - to submit to Parliament a

memorandum on policy in the area of health and safety at work; - to submit a communication and an action plan on financial participation by workers in the European Union; - to conduct in-depth examination and assessment of the Luxembourg process; - to propose activities to mark the European year of the disabled (2003). Lastly, it urges that action be taken with regard to the proposed integration of the candidate countries into the open methods of coordination being adopted in the areas of employment, education and training, social inclusion and pensions, and calls on the Commission to submit a report to the Council and Parliament shortly on this matter.