Resolution on the outcome of the Brussels European Council, 20-21 March 2003, concerning the Lisbon strategy

2003/2530(RSP) - 27/03/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the outcome of the European Council in Brussels on 20 /21 March 2003, concerning the Lisbon strategy.

Parliament stated that further action was needed, especially by larger Member States, to advance in parallel the four priority objectives laid down by the European Council.

The Commission is asked to present a detailed roadmap by October 2003, indicating how the agreed objectives will be reached by 2010.

Parliament approved the current Employment Strategy, and felt that it was an efficient instrument to foster employment in the European Union. The Employment Committee (EMCO) is best placed to assess employment issues and therefore, there was no need to create a new Task Force on Employment.

Whilst Parliament supported the Lisbon strategy, it believed that the open method of coordination and peer review are not sufficient on their own to bring about the dynamic structural changes required. It noted the application of the open method of coordination in support of research and innovation policy, in the expectation of seeing more concrete evidence of progress towards the goal of earmarking 3% of GDP for R&D.

Moving on, Parliament stated that the creation of a significant number of Europe-wide and national public-private partnership investment projects (operating in such areas as education and training, research, information and frontier technologies, telecommunications, energy and transportation networks) will be of great importance for the future of the European economy.

It regretted the absence of concrete progress in the field of environmental indicators for sound assessment of sustainable development, including the adoption of quantified sectoral environmental targets within the Cardiff process and the adoption of a mechanism to evaluate the implementation of the outcome of the Johannesburg Summit.

The fight against poverty and social exclusion is a vital objective of the integrated strategy. It is essential to coordinate efforts to improve and safeguard social protection systems organised and financed in accordance with high social principles and standards.

Parliament welcomed the European Council's commitment to keep up the momentum of pension reform by Member States, given the interaction between pension reform, employment policy, sound public finances and social cohesion.

It also welcomed the European Council's firm statement on the need for concrete measures to speed up reforms of tax and benefit systems and of the labour market, especially by improving wage formulation systems, modernising employment legislation and integrating underemployed sections of the population which suffer discrimination.