Employment: guidelines for Member States' policies, review. Employment package

2003/0068(CNS) - 03/06/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Herman SCHMID (GUE/NGL, Sweden) making several amendments to the Commission's proposal. (Please refer to the document dated 21/05/03.) In a recital, Members stated that the open coordination procedure was developed in the field of European employment policy. It should be further developed and improved so that the national employment policy measures of the 25 Member States may be compared and coordinated more effectively. In addition, it could also be applied to, and adjusted to take account of, the employment policy measures taken in Member States in such a way that the traditional labour-market administration hierarchies are broken up and reformed. Parliament also emphasised the following points: - on the question of the new heading of gender equality, Member States should devise measures aimed at providing care services for children and other dependants, policies to improve working conditions and to eliminate gender gaps (unequal pay, high rate of long-term unemployment, job market segregation and unequal division of family responsibilities); - investment in and use of public services and resources to reconcile work and family life and to manage changes and restructuring in family life, particularly in support of single-parent families. Attempts will be made to achieve, by 2010, 90% coverage of childcare services for all children to mandatory school age in each Member State, and, in general, to promote policies designed to create incentives which will encourage the sharing of family responsibilities. - employment programmes must also be targeted at older workers so that employers have an incentive to retain older workers in their jobs; one possible approach would be to co-finance these projects in part from the Structural Funds; - since 2003 is the European Year of People with Disabilities, and since many people with disabilities do not have access to employment, special attention should be paid to, and support provided for, innovative schemes for the training of people with disabilities with a view to their being taught the skills which they require to enter full employment; - work must be made more attractive for employers and employees by means of lawful employment incentives so that the tax burden on labour is significantly reduced, the creation of new jobs becomes less costly and net income increases. Specific attention should be paid to the sectors where the amount of undeclared work undertaken by women is very high, such as agriculture or domestic service. Special attention must also be given to the working conditions of immigrant women.