Employment policy: strengthening the local dimension of the European strategy

2002/2034(COS) - 04/07/2002 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the resolution drafted by Herman SCHMID (GUE/NGL, Sweden) on the Commission Communication. (Please refer to the document dated 28/05/02.) Parliament stated that public authorities have crucial responsibility for initiating local employment strategies, in close cooperation with the local business community, the trade unions, the NGOs and other relevant local and regional actors. The social economy and the third sector also have an active role with regard to local labour markets, in terms of social inclusion, entrepreneurship and economic activity (particularly in the services sector). Local employment strategies must develop into integrated packages of measures which analyze resources and needs, identify those who could be involved, coordinate their actions and provide training and information. Parliament went on to emphasise the importance of territorial employment pacts for local and regional development, which combine local communities in network cooperation and make joint efforts possible. There is particularly a need for risk capital designed to give local entrepreneurs easier access to credit. Lifelong learning programmes are very important. Clear decisions on how to finance educational expansion are needed. Parliament welcomed the Commission's promotion of local employment for women and gender equality. It pointed to the need for good quality childcare provision and the principle of gender neutral wage agreements guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. It criticised the Commission for its earlier reluctant attitude to the implementation of heading B5-503 'Local Employment commitment', which showed a very poor take-up rate in 2000 by reason of an inadequate information policy. Parliament went on to point out that the Commission devotes too little attention to the specific problems of certain categories of women, especially migrants and asylum seekers. There should be a more specific policy for these categories.