Employment: overview and political assessment of the implementation of the 2001 guidelines. Joint report

2001/2168(COS) - 24/10/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Barbara Weiler (PES, Germany) on guidelines for employment policies for 2002. Parliament welcomed the guidelines and confirmed that achieving full employment is a priority objective. In addition to the proper implementation of the four pillars of Luxembourg strategy, this can be attained through, inter alia, progress in structural reforms, investment in training and an active social state to develop policies based on integration which will protect the weaker elements in society. First pillar: improving employability. The Commission's policy on women and older employees is endorsed. Parliament called on the Commission to investigate the reasons for the discrepancy between the number of women graduating in scientific disciplines and the number who are successful in obtaining professional posts. Second pillar: development of entrepreneurship and job creation. Parliament took a dim view of moonlighting and called for the extension of the guideline containing measures to combat unofficial employment. This should take practical measures concerning the tax and social security systems. Member States should support job-creation in the not-for-profit sector and the social economy. This aspect of the European Employment Strategy should be given a much higher priority. It stressed the importance not merely of reviewing, but of adopting specific measures aiming to support women who wish to set up businesses. Third pillar: promoting the adaptability of undertakings and their employees. Parliament considers that more flexible forms of employment contracts are only acceptable if they give workers sufficient security. It called on the Commission to submit a proposal for a directive based on the principle that temporary workers should receive the same treatment as those in regular employment. Fourth pillar: strengthening measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women. Parliament regretted that the Guideline proposal does not specifically discuss actions to give women a more varied range of employment choices with better wages and guaranteed rights. The principle of equal pay should be implemnted as quickly as possible. Parliament underscored the call for an increase in political coordination between the individual institutional players and with the social partners in preparing and implementing the Luxembourg strategy.