

Situation of the European economy, report on the broad guidelines for economic policies BGEF

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Robert GOEBBELS (PES, LU) on the EU's Broad Economic Policy Guidelines. The report expressed regret at the delays in implementing the Lisbon Strategy and called for a number of measures to improve the EU's economic situation.

MEPs urged the Commission to step up its efforts to complete the internal market and ensure fair competition in all sectors. They supported the independence of the European Central Bank and the harmonisation of both the economic hypotheses and the timetables for setting national budgets for eurozone members. They added that Labour market reforms should be carried out so as to strike a balance between flexibility and security.

The report said a general increase in working time would be unavoidable to cope with demographic change and cover all economic and social needs. The committee expressed alarm at continuing high unemployment and stressed the need to create an environment which "promotes the spirit of enterprise and a risk-taking culture", by simplifying the regulatory environment, easing the administrative burden on small businesses and reducing the general level of taxation.

MEPs also said that the growth of free international trade, founded on equal opportunities, would both contribute to the development of poor countries and create new markets for developed countries.