The Commission's recommendations on broad general economic policy guidelines BGEP, 2005-2008

2005/2017(INI) - 12/07/2005 - Final act

PURPOSE: adoption of recommendations on the broad guidelines for the economic policies of the Member States and the Community (2005-2008).

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Recommendation 2005/601/EC

CONTENT: The European Council of March 2005 relaunched the Lisbon strategy by refocusing on growth and employment in Europe1. By taking this decision, the Heads of State and Government delivered a clear message concerning the Union’s priorities over the next few years. Europe must focus its policies further on growth and employment to achieve the Lisbon goals, against a sound macro-economic policy background and within a framework aimed at social cohesion and environmental sustainability, which are vital pillars of the Lisbon strategy.

Particular attention needs to be paid to the delivery of the Lisbon agenda. In order to achieve these objectives, the Union must do more to mobilise all the resources at national and Community levels so that their synergies can be put to more effective use. Furthermore, the involvement of relevant stakeholders can help to raise awareness of the need for growth and stability orientated macroeconomic policies and for structural reforms, improve the quality of implementation, and increase the sense of ownership of the Lisbon strategy.

To this end, these Broad economic policy guidelines (BEPGs) reflect the new start for the Lisbon strategy and concentrate on the contribution of economic policies to higher growth and more jobs. Section A of these BEPGs deals with the contribution that macroeconomic policies can make in this respect. Section B focuses on the measures and policies that the Member States should carry out in order to boost knowledge and innovation for growth and to make Europe a more attractive place to invest and work. In line with the conclusions of the Brussels European Council (22 and 23 March 2005), as a general instrument for coordinating economic policies, the BEPGs should continue to embrace the whole range of macroeconomic and microeconomic policies, as well as employment policy insofar as this interacts with those policies; the BEPGs will ensure general economic consistency between the three strands of the strategy. The existing multilateral surveillance arrangements for the BEPGs will continue to apply.

These guidelines are applicable to all Member States and to the Community. They should foster coherence of reform measures included in the National Reform Programmes established by Member States and will be complemented by the Lisbon Community Programme 2005-2008 covering all action to be undertaken at Community level in the interest of growth and employment. Implementation of all relevant aspects of these guidelines should take into account gender mainstreaming.