Promoting decent work for all

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report drawn up by Marie PANAYOTOPOULOS-CASSIOTOU (EPP-ED, EL) on promoting decent work for all. Taking into consideration the Commission communication on Promoting decent work for all, the committee called on the European Union and the Member States to promote decent work conditions within and outside the Union through a better implementation of the existing legislative instruments as well as through a wider cooperation with ILO and private companies.

Considering that decent work is a centrepiece of the fight against poverty and social exclusion, (§1) MEPs asked the Commission to enforce its proposed strategy for better mobilisation of the EU internal and external policies on the promotion of the decent work agenda, especially in matters of development, external assistance, enlargement, neighbourhood policy, trade and migration (§ 6). The report urged the Council and the Commission to work actively with ILO in ensuring that the terms of the agreements GSP+ are fully complied with and, where necessary, using the powers at its disposal to cancel preferences with any countries failing to respect fundamental social, labour and human rights (§ 8). Moreover the report stressed the need to improve the transparency of labour market, so that all kind of work (temporary, permanent, full-time, and that which is paid on an hourly basis) are official, decently paid, and fully respectful of workers' rights, core labour standards, social gender and gender equality (§ 15).

The committee, convinced that the implementation of the ILO conventions related to decent work should be promoted in the neighbourhood and external policies, called the Commission and the Member States to support the ILO in strengthening its supervisory system and mechanisms (§ 17). In this respect, MEPs asked the Commission to encourage the respect of the ILO Core Labour Standards and the objective of decent work in the trade policy of the WTO members as an effective and binding set of rules, complemented by a mechanism of sanctions for partners which do not adjust to such standards (§ 21). Among its other recommendations, the committee called for granting the observer status at the WTO to ILO as well as for compliance of WTO with ILO's decisions about trade sanctions against countries failing to comply with international conventions social (§ 24 and 26).

Furthermore the report recommended the Commission to investigate and identify companies which continuously and persistently permit the violation of core labour standards in any part of production and supply chain and called for such a list to be made available to EU-based importers (46). MEPs also urged the Member States and the EU to promote the application of good practices of corporate responsibility by all companies, wherever they perform their activities, with the aim of creating a safe, flexible and high-quality working environment (48).

The report called on the Member States to increase the number and quality of the competencies and tools of the labour inspectorate so as to enforce the safety and health at work, working conditions and other social legislation (62) as well as to allocate more resources in order to enable the labour inspectorates to carry out their tasks to ensure that national labour laws are applied and not evaded (63). Lastly, MEPs asked the Commission and the Member States to improve measures to allow all workers to achieve a better balance between work and family life, bearing in mind that long hours, stress and insecurity of employment threaten the fabric of family life (73).