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REPORT

on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States
(COM(2006)0032 – C6-0047/2006 – 2006/0010(CNS))

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Rapporteur: Magda Kósáné Kovács

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
majority of the votes cast
- **I Cooperation procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- **II Cooperation procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- *** Assent procedure
*majority of Parliament's component Members except in cases
covered by Articles 105, 107, 161 and 300 of the EC Treaty and
Article 7 of the EU Treaty*
- ***I Codecision procedure (first reading)
majority of the votes cast
- ***II Codecision procedure (second reading)
*majority of the votes cast, to approve the common position
majority of Parliament's component Members, to reject or amend
the common position*
- ***III Codecision procedure (third reading)
majority of the votes cast, to approve the joint text

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the Commission.)

Amendments to a legislative text

In amendments by Parliament, amended text is highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the legislative text for which a correction is proposed, to assist preparation of the final text (for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a given language version). These suggested corrections are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

CONTENTS

	Page
DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION	5
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT	9
PROCEDURE.....	10

DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

on the proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States

(COM(2006)0032 – C6-0047/2006 – 2006/0010(CNS))

(Consultation procedure)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to the Council (COM(2006)0032)¹,
 - having regard to Article 128(2) of the EC Treaty, pursuant to which the Council consulted Parliament (C6-0047/2006),
 - having regard to Rule 51 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (A6-0086/2006),
1. Approves the Commission proposal as amended;
 2. Calls on the Commission to alter its proposal accordingly, pursuant to Article 250(2) of the EC Treaty;
 3. Calls on the Council to notify Parliament if it intends to depart from the text approved by Parliament;
 4. Asks the Council to consult Parliament again if it intends to amend the Commission proposal substantially;
 5. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council and Commission.

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1
Recital 1 a (new)

(1a) Following the new challenges set by enlargement of the EU in May 2004, the employment guidelines laid down for the period 2005-2008 have taken on particular importance and new implications for employment of young and older people, workers' health, combating work-related

¹ Not yet published in OJ.

accidents at European level, the integration of vulnerable social groups, combating social exclusion, on outlawing illegal working, improving the quality and the stability of jobs, and the establishment of equal rights and opportunities for men and women, which should be evaluated with indicators per guideline to measure progress in gender equality.

Amendment 2
Recital 1 b (new)

(1b) The Employment Guidelines cannot be implemented without the effective implementation of Community legislation by individual Member States, in particular that relating to anti-discrimination policy under Article 13 of the Treaty, and health and safety legislation. The Commission must improve its monitoring and enforcement procedure.

Amendment 3
Recital 1 c (new)

(1c) Successful labour market integration requires an even greater variety of support measures which create channels for inclusion and combat discrimination.

Amendment 4
Recital 1 d (new)

(1d) According to the conclusions of the spring European Council held on 22 and 23 March 2005, The objectives of full employment, job quality, labour productivity and social cohesion must be reflected in clear and measurable priorities: attracting and retaining more people in the labour market on the basis of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women and the modernisation of social protection systems; reducing administrative costs, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises; improving the adaptability of workers and businesses and increasing the flexibility of

working hours and labour markets; in addition, increasing investment in human capital by improving training and skills.

Amendment 5
Recital 1 e (new)

(1e) Further progress must be made in removing barriers and restrictions to people's freedom to move from one Member State to another (Guideline 21), particularly in the context of workers' mobility, including researchers and other professionals (Guideline 22) with a view to achieving a Europe without borders within the EU internal market and in order to put an end to the inconsistencies in this area generated by Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003, which grants this right without restriction to third-country nationals who have been resident in the European Union for more than five years.

Amendment 6
Recital 1 f (new)

(1f) As the employment guidelines cannot be followed without adequate funding The Member States should take these objectives into account when adopting the Financial Perspective 2007–2013.

Amendment 7
Recital 2

(2) The Employment Guidelines and the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines should be fully reviewed only every three years, while in the intermediate years until 2008 their updating should remain strictly limited.

(2) In order to ensure that they enjoy the stability which they require if they are to be successfully implemented, the Employment Guidelines and the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines should be fully reviewed only every three years, while in the intermediate years until 2008 their updating should remain strictly limited. For this reason the European Parliament should play a more active role in the intermediate years, with particular regard to the monitoring of the Member States' implementation of the guidelines.

Amendment 8

Recital 3

(3) The examination of the Member States' National Reform Programmes contained in the Commission's Annual Progress Report and in the Joint Employment Report shows that Member States should proceed with employment policy reforms across the board in accordance with the priorities set out in the 2005-2008 Guidelines.

(3) The examination of the Member States' National Reform Programmes contained in the Commission's Annual Progress Report and in the Joint Employment Report shows that Member States should proceed with employment policy reforms across the board in accordance with the priorities set out in the 2005-2008 Guidelines. ***Member States and the European Commission are reminded that gender mainstreaming and the promotion of gender equality should be ensured in all action taken, as equal opportunities and combating discrimination are essential for progress.***

Justification

The Lisbon employment targets call for a 60% participation of women in the labour force by the year 2010. In 2004, women constituted 55.7% of the labour force. The participation of women in the workforce is significantly lower than that of men. This presents a waste of human resources for the EU. As stressed by the European Parliament in its resolution on the future of the Lisbon Strategy from the point of view of the gender perspective participation of women in the labour market is vital to economic growth, prosperity and competitiveness.

Amendment 9

Recital 4 a (new)

(4a) In order to promote economic growth, employment and boost competitiveness, Member States should announce their research, innovation and research spending targets, as well as the measures they propose to take in respect of investment for the benefit of small and medium-sized enterprises and of micro-financing for women's and family-run businesses which use innovative forms of technology.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The European Parliament welcomes the Commission proposal.

Enlargement sets new challenges for the whole European Union, particularly in the areas of employment, social integration, and social and regional cohesion. The guidelines for employment 2005–2008 are aimed at all 25 members of the European Union, but after enlargement certain fundamental points stand out.

Encouraging young people and older people into employment (Guideline 18) is vital to respond to the demographic challenge throughout Europe. It should be remembered, however, that life expectancy is considerably lower in some countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Improving workers' health (Guideline 21) should be given a higher profile in the Member States: the death rate of middle-aged workers is catastrophically high in some States, and this has significant implications for the job market. The poor state of health of the population in some countries leads to using up the 'reserve stock' of human capital.

The integration of people who are remote from the labour market (Guideline 18) is key to eliminating poverty in the new Member States, given that social exclusion and deprivation are a much bigger factor there; pro-active and preventive action should be taken to improve access for vulnerable social groups to employment and training.

Particular attention should be paid to reducing undeclared work in the new Member States (Guideline 20), where this is reaching higher rates than in the old Member States.

Moreover, it is important to remove all obstacles to the free movement of European workers (Guideline 21). At present, several Member States, taking advantage of the possibility offered by the accession treaties, limit the number of migrant workers from the new Member States, while since 23 January 2006, third country nationals having lived in the EU for more than five years have unrestricted access to employment throughout the EU (Council Directive 2003/109/EC of 25 November 2003). This has created an anomalous situation in which third country workers have more freedom to move within the EU than those of the countries which have just joined.

PROCEDURE

Title	Proposal for a Council decision on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States		
References	COM(2006)0032 – C6-0047/2006 – 2006/0010(CNS)		
Date of consulting Parliament	10.2.2006		
Committee responsible Date announced in plenary	EMPL 16.2.2006		
Committee(s) asked for opinion(s) Date announced in plenary	ECON 16.2.2006		
Not delivering opinion(s) Date of decision	ECON 14.3.2006		
Enhanced cooperation Date announced in plenary	...		
Rapporteur(s) Date appointed	Magda Kósáné Kovács 13.1.2006		
Previous rapporteur(s)	...		
Simplified procedure – date of decision Date of decision	...		
Legal basis disputed Date of JURI opinion	...		
Financial endowment amended Date of BUDG opinion	...		
Parliament to consult European Economic and Social Committee – date decided in plenary	...		
Parliament to consult Committee of the Regions – date decided in plenary	...		
Discussed in committee	21.2.2006	20.3.2006	21.3.2006
Date adopted	21.3.2006		
Result of final vote	+: 34 –: 2 0: 2		
Members present for the final vote	Jan Andersson, Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, Iles Braghetto, Philip Bushill-Matthews, Milan Cabrnock, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Proinsias De Rossa, Harald Ettl, Richard Falbr, Ilda Figueiredo, Joel Hasse Ferreira, Roger Helmer, Stephen Hughes, Ona Juknevičienė, Jan Jerzy Kulakowski, Jean Lambert, Raymond Langendries, Bernard Lehideux, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Mario Mantovani, Ana Mato Adrover, Maria Matsouka, Csaba Óry, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Jacek Protasiewicz, José Albino Silva Peneda, Kathy Sinnott, Jean Spautz, Anne Van Lancker, Gabriele Zimmer		
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Edit Bauer, Françoise Castex, Magda Kósáné Kovács, Leopold Józef Rutowicz, Elisabeth Schroedter, Gabriele Hildegard Stauner, Georgios Toussas, Claude Turmes		
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	...		
Date tabled	24.3.2006		

Comments (available in one language only)	...
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