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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on statements by the Council and Commission

pursuant to Rule 103(2) of the Rules of Procedure

by Jan Tadeusz Masiel, Ewa Tomaszewska, Zbigniew Krzysztof Kuźmiuk and
Ryszard Czarnecki

on behalf of the UEN Group

on the Social Package

European Parliament resolution on the Social Package

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission communication entitled 'Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe' (COM(2008) 412),
 - having regard to the proposal for a directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (COM(2008) 426),
 - having regard to the proposal for a directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare (COM(2008) 414),
 - having regard to the proposal for a directive on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees (COM(2008) 419),
 - having regard to Commission communication entitled 'Improving competences for the 21st century: An agenda for European cooperation on schools (COM(2008) 425),
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the social policy agenda is a key component of European Union economic and social modernisation, and its implementation will be decisive in achieving the strategic objectives laid down in the Lisbon Strategy,
- B. whereas the European Union has successfully responded to emerging social challenges over the past fifty years, and this led to the creation of the European social model,
- C. whereas social realities are changing rapidly and the social policy agenda should be adapted to new challenges such as globalisation, demographic change, technological progress, climate change and immigration,
- D. whereas European social policy has brought about achievements by improving living conditions and stimulating employment growth, many problems, such as unemployment, social isolation and poverty, remain unsolved,
- E. whereas one of the important challenges facing the European Union is to ensure equal opportunities for all citizens,
1. Welcomes the renewed social package presented by the Commission as a step forward in redefining the European social model in order to keep pace with changing social realities;
 2. Shares the Commission's approach to the Renewed Social Agenda, which is built around such aims as opportunities, access and solidarity; believes that the realisation of these

goals would be an appropriate response to the new challenges which have emerged in recent years;

3. Regrets, however, that while the challenges and problems are recognised the package as a whole does not contain a coherent vision of the renewed European Social Model; considers that the initiatives included in this package are not clearly connected with the realisation of the priorities set out;
4. Welcomes the Commission's approach to equal opportunities as set out in the proposal for a directive on the application of patients' rights in cross-border healthcare; considers that easy access for all European citizens to quality healthcare is essential to tackle such challenges as demographic change and labour force mobility;
5. Appreciates the Commission's efforts to facilitate the cross-border interoperability of electronic health records presented in the recommendation on the cross-border interoperability of electronic health records;
6. Welcomes the Commission's communication entitled 'Improving competences for the 21st century: An agenda for European cooperation on schools'; stresses that, in order to achieve the Lisbon Strategy goals, it is essential to ensure equal access to education and lifelong learning for young people; emphasises that improving school systems by strengthening cooperation on education to ensure that pupils acquire key competences is vital for fighting poverty and social exclusion;
7. Notes the Commission's proposal for a directive on the establishment of a European Works Council or a procedure in Community-scale undertakings and Community-scale groups of undertakings for the purposes of informing and consulting employees; appreciates the EWC achievements in improving dialogue between employers and workers; is concerned, however, that the new model for European Works Councils would have an impact on the flexibility and competitiveness of the European economy and enterprises;
8. Considers that the idea of extending legal protection against discrimination, which is behind the proposal for a directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation is contrary to the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality; takes the view that, since antidiscrimination law exists in every Member State, there is no need to introduce any legal framework at Community level to fight discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation and to put into effect the principle of equal treatment, outside the field of employment;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.