

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Committee on Culture and Education

2007/2209(INI)

9.10.2007

OPINION

of the Committee on Culture and Education

for the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

on common principles of flexicurity
(2007/2209(INI))

Draftsman: Giovanni Berlinguer

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Culture and Education calls on the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Considers necessary a comprehensive approach to flexicurity which aims to maintain and improve social equality, job protection, gender equality, good quality of jobs and collective bargaining; takes the view, within the framework of this global approach, that lifelong learning is an essential element for a dynamic labour market and for enabling workers to remain employable throughout their careers and lives;
2. Highlights the need, within the framework of a comprehensive approach to flexibility and mobility, to implement the transferability of acquired social security rights;
3. Recalls the right of access to lifelong learning, and the recognition and transferability of formal, non-formal and informal education and competences, which are crucial factors in enabling individuals to be able to make transitions from job to job, and from unemployment or inactivity to employment, being elements that improve their employment chances;
4. Stresses the link between weak job protection and inequalities, inasmuch as young people, the less skilled, women, migrant workers and adults with lower education levels may come under far greater pressure at work and, for these groups, many inequalities as regards access to lifelong learning still remain;
5. Reiterates the important contribution of information technology skills to employability and, accordingly, calls on the Commission to reinforce programmes such as Lifelong Learning in order to enable all citizens of all ages to have equal access to education and training;
6. Recalls that, for a competitive Europe, there is a need to increase education levels and to invest more in education and training;
7. Reiterates the importance of promoting, reinforcing and establishing a lifelong learning culture, especially for adults, by creating flexible opportunities for education and training programmes as well as suitable conditions for implementing them;
8. Considers that the approach to flexicurity must be coherent in all respects, including the social, educational and cultural aspects, so that, within this framework, both social dialogue and negotiation between social partners may actually achieve the goals intended;
9. Notes that, although lifelong training and the organisation of the employment market are obviously closely interconnected – inasmuch as the possession of constantly upgraded skills is the greatest asset the most vulnerable members of the workforce can have in the context of a 'progressive' approach to flexicurity – the lifelong training system is often used by firms to invest in the workers they regard as necessary, while the rest are ignored, with the result that the cost burden of training them and resolving the problem of getting them back into work is shifted on to the public purse;

10. Underlines the need to include educational and training measures in a wider flexicurity policy agenda;
11. Considers that lifelong learning should address opportunity gaps among workers and must start in the early education system; takes the view that illiteracy and innumeracy must be fought, and the qualification levels of all school leavers must be improved, beginning in the early education system.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	04.10.2007
Result of final vote	+ : 20 - : 1 0 : 0
Members present for the final vote	Maria Badia i Cutchet, Giovanni Berlinguer, Guy Bono, Věra Flasarová, Claire Gibault, Vasco Graça Moura, Lissy Gröner, Ruth Hieronymi, Manolis Mavrommatis, Ljudmila Novak, Doris Pack, Zdzisław Zbigniew Podkański, Karin Resetarits, Hannu Takkula, Helga Trüpel, Henri Weber, Thomas Wise, Tomáš Zatloukal
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Elisabeth Morin, Nina Škottová, Ewa Tomaszewska
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	