Procedure file

Basic information

INI - Own-initiative procedure	2002/2215(INI)	Procedure completed
Economic and employment policies: streamlining of annual coordination cycles Subject 4.15 Employment policy, action to combat unemployment 5.10.01 Convergence of economic policies, public deficit, interest rates		

Key players

European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs	PPE-DE KARAS Othmar	01/10/2002
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	EMPL Employment and Social Affairs (Associated committee)	PSE BULLMANN Udo	01/10/2002
	ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
Council of the European Union	Council configuration	Meeting	Date
	Economic and Financial Affairs ECOFIN	2471	03/12/2002
	Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)	2451	30/09/2002
European Commission	Commission DG	Commissioner	
	Economic and Financial Affairs		

Key events

03/09/2002	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2002)0487	Summary
30/09/2002	Debate in Council	2451	
24/10/2002	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
19/11/2002	Vote in committee		Summary
19/11/2002	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0400/2002	
03/12/2002	Debate in Council	2471	
04/12/2002	Debate in Parliament		

05/12/2002	Decision by Parliament	T5-0583/2002	Summary
05/12/2002	End of procedure in Parliament		
30/01/2004	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2002/2215(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55; Rules of Procedure EP 57_o
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ECON/5/16835

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		COM(2002)0487	03/09/2002	EC	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0400/2002	19/11/2002	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0583/2002 OJ C 027 30.01.2004, p. 0025-0107 E	05/12/2002	EP	Summary

Economic and employment policies: streamlining of annual coordination cycles

PURPOSE : to streamline the annual economic and employment policy co-ordination cycles. CONTENT : to ensure more coherent and effective policy-making, the European Commission has agreed to streamline the annual economic and employment policy coordination cycles. To recall, the EU has developed a comprehensive coordination framework, comprising notably the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs) and the European Employment Strategy (EES) with its Employment Guidelines (EGs) and Recommendations. However, the different timing of the annual cycle of those two processes and the ad hoc addition over the years of new elements has arguably made the coordination framework complex. The Barcelona Summit delivered a request for improvements. The changes now agreed by the Commission are designed to achieve this. The Commission has outlined how the policy coordination cycle can be better streamlined. The main changes introduced by the Commission are: a better and more clearly articulated EU policy coordination cycle. The Commission will organise existing coordination processes around a few key points to make the coordination cycle more transparent and intelligible and thereby strengthen its visibility and impact. The main building blocks are: 1) the 'Implementation Package' (January) : The Commission will present the conclusions of its review of the implementation of EU policy guidance in form of an Implementation Package, together with and in support of its Spring Report to the annual Spring European Council on economic and social affairs. The 'Implementation Package', including the Broad Economic Policy Guidelines (BEPGs) Implementation Report, the draft Joint Employment Report and the implementation report on the Internal Market Strategy, will contain a detailed assessment of implementation in the various policy areas. The 'Spring Report', on the other hand, will remain the Commission's strategic input to the Spring European Council. It will continue to highlight the main issues and present the Commission's strategic policy priorities for the EU; 2) the 'Guidelines Package' (April) : following the general political orientations given by the Spring European Council, the Commission will define and present its proposals for further action in the various policy areas together in a 'Guidelines Package', composed of the BEPGs, the Employment Guidelines (EGs) and the Employment Recommendations. Subsequent to further consideration by the European Parliament and the competent Council formations, the June European Council will draw up conclusions. The relevant Council formations will adopt the BEPGs, the EGs and the Employment Recommendations. For greater effectiveness, the two main changes are: - Enhanced focus on the medium-term in framing policy orientations an increased medium-term orientation in the EU's economic and employment policy strategy will strengthen the strategic character of the BEPGs and the European Employment Strategy. This will provide for stability in the EU policy guidelines and facilitate an effective follow-up. The 'Guidelines Package' will continue to be presented on an annual basis, they will adopt a more distinct, medium-term perspective and will as a rule be fully reviewed only once every three years. In the intermediate years, changes should be limited to those warrantedby economic developments and progress made with respect to implementation. Overall, the more strategic orientation should increase the visibility, predictability and impact of EU policy guidance; - Improving policy coherence the coherence of the 'Guidelines Package' will be improved by specifying more clearly the contents to be covered by the respective instruments. While maintaining the central role of the BEPGs for economic policy coordination and the more specific role of the EGs for defining the principles and modalities of policy coordination in the employment policy area, in full consistency with the BEPGs, complementarity of the instruments will be improved and the basic policy messages strengthened. In addition, the Commission will now reflect on how to streamline other processes into this model, and in particular, the open process of coordination in the Social Protection field currently covering social inclusion and pensions.?

Economic and employment policies: streamlining of annual coordination cycles

The committee adopted the own-initiative report by Othmar KARAS (EPP-ED, A) on the Commission communication on streamlining the annual economic and employment policy coordination cycles. It welcomed the Commission's approach - and in particular the focus on the medium-term - as an appropriate way of implementing the objectives of the Lisbon strategy but regretted the fact that the Commission had neglected the introduction of environmental goals even though the Gothenburg European Council had added sustainable development as a third dimension of the strategy. The Commission and Council were therefore urged to introduce guidelines and measurable targets in this field too. The report stressed that, while the BEPGs had to set the general economic policy framework and the Employment Strategy, in particular the Employment Guidelines, had to be the main instrument for setting objectives and methods for coordinating employment policy, there should nevertheless be improved recognition of the employment strategy in the BEPGs. The committee also said that the streamlined policy coordination cycle needed to be given greater democratic legitimacy and called for greater involvement of the European Parliament in the whole process, to be guaranteed under an interinstitutional arrangement. The specific timing arrangements for the streamlined and synchronised approach should be respected by all EU institutions. In this connection, the report expressed concern at the new timetable for the Guidelines Package, which it said gave the EP an even shorter time than before to examine the Commission proposal. It proposed that a special debate on the Commission's Spring report and implementation package as well as on Parliament's contribution to the Spring Council be held among the three institutions in good time enabling Parliament to express its opinion. The committee also stressed the need for Parliament's working method to be adapted and for the work of the relevant EP committees to be made more efficient through greater cooperation and coordination. Other recommendations included giving the social partners a greater role in implementing the Lisbon and Gothenburg strategy, through an efficient tripartite social summit and a strengthened macroeconomic social dialogue, and setting up an institutionalised dialogue with civil society through the Economic and Social Committee. Lastly, the report called on candidate countries to play a full part in implementing the Lisbon strategy and urged the Commission to provide support for training administrators from those countries to help them implement the Guideline Package priorities. ?

Economic and employment policies: streamlining of annual coordination cycles

The European Parliament adopted a resolution drafted by Othmar KARAS (EPP-ED, Austria) on the Commission communication. (Please refer to the document dated 19/11/02.) Parliament also suggested setting up an institutional dialogue with civil society in the framework of the Economic and Social Committee. It called upon the social partners to develop initiatives and specific cooperation with NGOs which operate in the relevant fields.?