

**UDENRIGSMINISTERIET**

**EUROPAUDVALGET**

Alm. del - bilag 956 (offentligt)

Medlemmerne af Folketingets Europaudvalg  
og deres stedfortrædere

Asiatisk Plads 2  
DK-1448 København K  
Tel. +45 33 92 00 00  
Fax +45 32 54 05 33  
E-mail: um@um.dk  
Telex 31292 ETR DK  
Telegr. adr. Etrangeres  
Girokonto 300-1806



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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges i forbindelse med Det Europæiske Råd i Stockholm den 23.-24. marts 2001 Kommissionens meddelelse vedrørende udnyttelse af Den Europæiske Unions potentiale - konsolidering og udbygning af Lissabon-strategien, 6454/01 ADD 1.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Karin Egeberg', is written across the lower middle of the page.



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**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 22 February 2001

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ADD 1

LIMITE

SOC 81

CAB 6

ECO 42

ECOFIN 42

EDUC 32

ENER 15

IND 6

MI 22

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TRANS 22

TH AKTERNE

**ADDENDUM TO THE FORWARDING OF A TEXT**

to : Coreper/Council (Employment and Social Policy)

No. Cion prop. : 6248/01 CAB 4 ECO 37 ECOFIN 35 EDUC 26 ENER 8 IND 4 MI 17 RECH 9  
SOC 64 TRANS 17

Subject : Opinion of the Employment Committee on the Commission Communication :  
Realising the European Union's potential: consolidating and extending the Lisbon  
strategy – Contribution of the European Commission to the Spring European  
Council, Stockholm, 23 and 24 March 2001  
- Letter from Mr O'Móráin to Ms Sahlin

Delegations will find attached the text of the cover letter addressed by Mr Séamus O'Móráin,  
Chairman of the Employment Committee, to Ms Mona Sahlin, President of the Council  
(Employment and Social Policy).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This letter was forwarded to the Council Secretariat in English only.



# The Employment Committee

*The Chairman*

Brussels, 22 February 2001

Dear Minister Sahlin,

Please find enclosed an Opinion of the Employment Committee on the Commission Communication 'Realising the European Union's potential: consolidating and extending the Lisbon strategy'. This has been drawn up in response to your request to the Committee to prepare an Opinion with a view to the preparation of the Stockholm European Council.

The main points we wish to emphasise in this contribution are:

- The Commission Communication is a reflective, concise and challenging statement of what has been achieved and what remains to be done in pursuit of the Lisbon Strategy. However, the balance and interaction between the economic, employment and social dimensions should be enhanced in line with European Council conclusions, including the European Social Agenda approved in Nice;
- The effective implementation of the Employment Strategy is vital to the attainment of the Lisbon objectives and a number of the action points proposed link in closely with the current Employment Guidelines. The most effective way to achieve them is through the Employment Strategy. Additionally, focusing more on attaining quality in work, as a significant attractive factor and as an incentive to work, should be one of the main dimensions for strengthening the Strategy;
- A majority of the Committee have reservations about the benefits of establishing EU level intermediate targets. On the matter of national targets, the Committee favours the provisions of the existing Guidelines which invite Member States to "consider" setting national targets;
- Recognition of the importance of the policy mix and of partnership in the development and implementation of policy actions and initiatives is welcome, with particular reference to the role of the Social Partners;
- The concept of the new European labour markets is welcome, as is the initiative to establish the Task Force on High Level Skills and Mobility - the Task Force should, in fulfilling its remit, take into account the ongoing work in relevant areas;

- The need to address skills gaps as a whole, but with particular reference to IT skills gaps, is welcome. The need to invest in people and the emphasis on developing a framework for lifelong learning are critical. These are also a key means of securing social inclusion;
- Many of the ambitions proposed under the eEurope, IT skills, Research, Innovation and Enterprise, and New Frontier Technologies sections will require the foundation of a strong and ongoing commitment to investment in people which is central to the Employment Strategy; and
- The indicators used give a valuable measure of progress but will need further refinement, in particular to develop qualitative aspects.

I hope that you will find this contribution useful as an input to your deliberations in advance of the Stockholm European Council.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed),

Séamus O'Móráin  
Employment Committee

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