

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1983 - 1984

---

14 NOVEMBER 1983

DOCUMENT 1-909/83/ANNEX II

ANNEX II

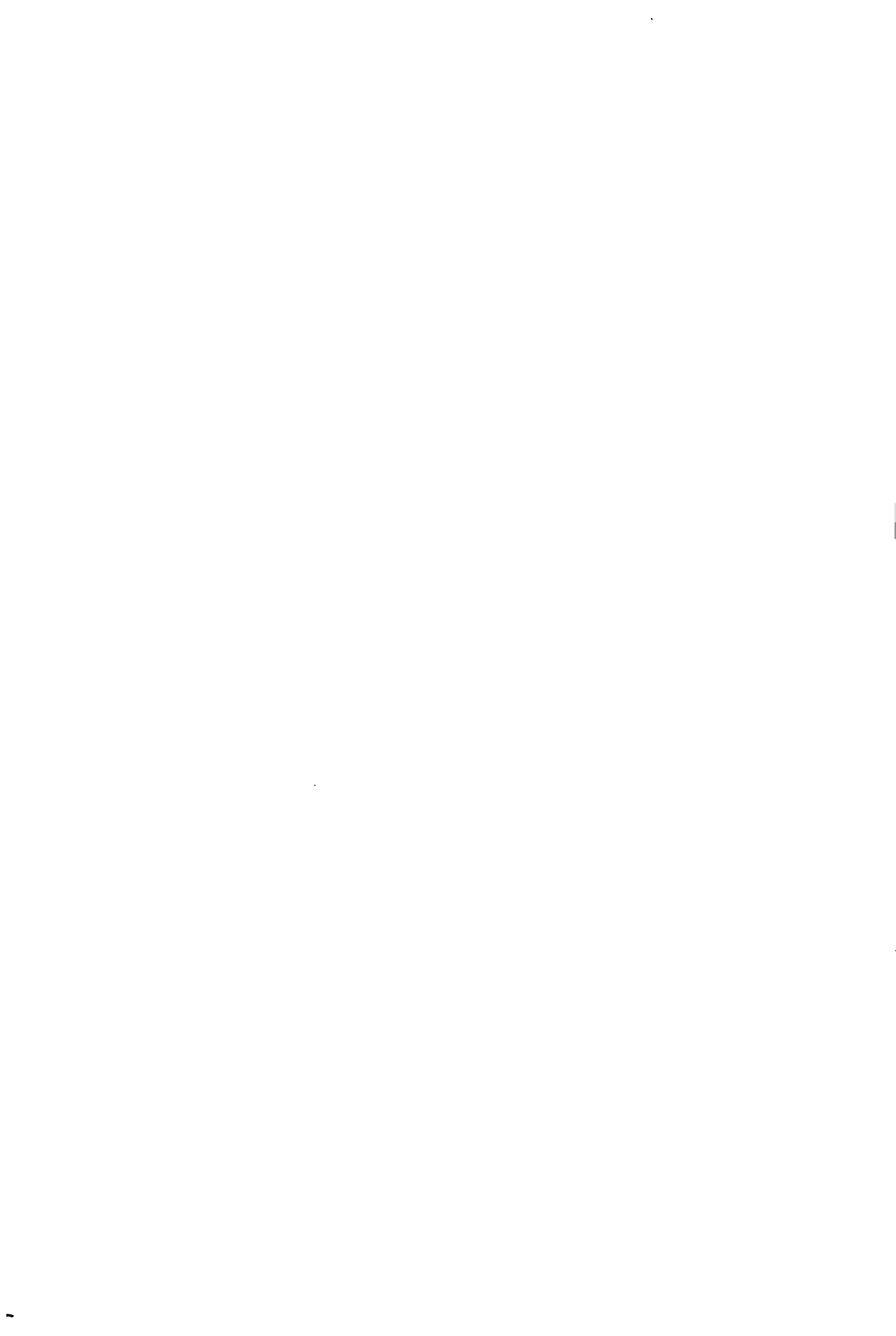
to the report by Mr VAN MINNEN

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment

o o  
o

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

PE 86.842/fin./Ann. II



## OPINION

of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Draftsman: Mr Van Rompuy

On 19 October 1983, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs appointed Mr Van Rompuy draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 3/4 November 1983 and adopted the conclusions contained therein by 9 votes to 6.

The following took part in the vote: Mr Moreau, chairman; Mr Hopper, vice-chairman; Mr Macario, vice-chairman; Mr Van Rompuy, draftsman; Mr Albers (deputizing for Mr Wagner), Mr Beazley, Mr Bonaccini, Mr Delorozoy, Mrs Desouches, Mr Halligan (deputizing for Mr Caborn), Mr Herman, Mr Leonardi, Mr Papapietro (deputizing for Mr Fernandez), Mr Rhys-Williams and Mr Welsh.

## The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

1. Agrees with the Commission that the priorities of the strategy to combat unemployment consist of policy measures designed to encourage economic growth, revive investment, foster industrial restructuring and increase the flexibility of the labour market, all of which must, however, be accompanied by specific measures in respect of employment, including measures relating to the reduction and reorganization of working time;
2. Refers to the prospects of limited economic growth, which mean that no short-term reversal of the current rising trend in unemployment will be possible and that working time will have to be reduced significantly and reorganized even if this can only be achieved gradually;
3. Stresses, however, that the policy on working time must be coordinated at Community level in order to prevent divergent national measures from leading to distortions of competition within the common market and hence advocates the establishment of principles for a Community policy in this area in accordance with the present proposals;
4. Emphasizes that the reorganization of working time can only contribute towards the creation of new jobs if it does not jeopardize the competitive position of European industry but, on the contrary, helps to achieve the necessary structural changes and greater competitiveness; to this end, under no circumstances should the reorganization of working time lead to an increase in unit production costs; with a view to increasing and optimizing returns on investment, consideration should be given to the best way of utilizing capital assets; in certain cases it will be necessary to extend the use of manufacturing apparatus and make greater use of shift work;
5. Stresses that when the policy on working time is elaborated, no rigid obligations should be imposed; on the contrary, the requisite flexibility must be guaranteed so that the competitive position and efficiency of undertakings are not adversely affected; for this reason, when the policy is formulated, account must be taken of the specific situation in each Member State and allowances made for the necessary degree of differentiation

according to sector and type of undertaking, with special attention being paid to small and medium-sized undertakings;

6. Considers, therefore, that a Council recommendation setting out policy objectives and guidelines would be a suitable instrument for the achievement of a convergent policy;
7. Takes the view, moreover, that the independence of the social partners in the conclusion of collective agreements must be respected, although every effort should be made to achieve cooperation at European level between the European Institutions and the social partners;
8. Refers furthermore, to the importance of promoting part-time work, while respecting social rights, which can make a significant contribution to the reduction of unemployment particularly among young people;
9. Refers, finally, to its previous opinion<sup>1</sup>, which set out in greater detail its views on the various implications of an adaptation of working time;
10. Considers that while the draft Council recommendation is couched in less specific terms than the viewpoints expressed both here and in the above-mentioned opinion, the principles are nevertheless the same and therefore approves the draft recommendation.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Doc. 1-425/81 of 24 August 1981, opinion of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs on employment and the adaptation of working time, draftsman of the opinion: Mr B. Beumer.

